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THE ABBASID TRADITION

Qur'ans of the 8th to the 10th centuries AD

by François Déroche



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Foreword

Islamic manuscripts form one of the great intellectual and artistic patrimonies of mankind. Their importance has long been recognized in the non-Muslim West, where private individuals and public institutions have been collecting them for at least four centuries, but most are still to be found in the lands where they were made. Despite the efforts of several Muslim governments in the Near East and beyond and of institutions such as the Manuscript Commission of the League of Arab States, neither the total number of these works nor a full list of their locations can be given. This is so even in the case of Arabic manuscripts, the most extensively studied group. Nevertheless, it is clear that the numbers involved are considerable. A substantial proportion of these contain the text of the Holy Qur'an, for no other work can have been copied out by hand so often in the course of the last 1400 years. The majority of surviving Qur'ans are simply written and sparsely illuminated, but many are magnificent examples of the arts of the calligrapher and the illuminator.

The largest and finest collection of Qur'ans is undoubtedly that of the Topkapı Palace Library in Istanbul, which contains the major part of the former imperial library of the Ottoman sultans. There are also important collections in the library attached to the Astan-i Quds-i Rizavi, the shrine of Imam Riza in Mashhad; in the Museum of Ancient Iran in Tehran; in the National Library in Cairo; and in various libraries and museums in India. While circumstances have made the huge Topkapı collection well-nigh comprehensive, the others are not only smaller but have a more regional bias.

Collecting activity in Europe and North America has led to the accumulation of large numbers of Arabic, Persian and Turkish manuscripts, and as a matter of course these have included copies of the Qur'an. The main collection of Qur'ans outside the Muslim world are to be found in the British Library in London, in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris, in the Vatican Library in Rome, and in the Chester Beatty Library in Dublin. However, with the exception of the Chester Beatty Library, the acquisition of this material was never pursued as systematically as in the case of literary, historical and scientific manuscripts. Even though the text of the Qur'an is invariable, palaeographic, aesthetic or historical criteria could have been used to determine what entered these collections, but, with the one exception, no attempt was made to apply such criteria.

It was with an awareness of the need for a consistent approach of this kind that I began to form a collection of Qur'anic manuscripts some 20 years ago. During this time attempts have been made to secure examples from every period and from every part of the Islamic world. As a result the body of material acquired is notable for the wide range it covers. This material can now be used to illustrate the entire spectrum of Qur'anic manuscript development, and, as there are often several examples from the same period, comparisons can be made both within the period and between contemporary manuscripts from different areas. The items in the Collection are of great historical and aesthetic importance. These have been conserved and, where appropriate, restored, and in some cases this has led to interesting discoveries.

The Qur'anic manuscripts that I have brought together are now to be published as the first four volumes of a general catalogue of the Collection. The first volume will cover the Qur'anic material in the three major styles that developed before AD 1000; the second encompasses material produced between AD 1000 and AD 1400; the third continues the task to the end of the 16th century; and the fourth includes the Qur'ans of the 17th century and later. My hope is that, when the publication of these four volumes is completed, they will constitute the most comprehensive survey of Qur'anic calligraphy and illumination yet undertaken. For their help

in achieving this aim my thanks are due to Dr François Déroche, the author of the volume on the earliest items, and Dr David James, author of the two succeeding volumes. My thanks are also due to Gordon Roberton and Christopher Phillips for their photography; to Diane O'Carroll for her drawings; to Don Baker and Henrietta Spink for their work on the conservation and restoration of the Collection; to Yasin Safadi, head of the Arabic section at the British Library, Nabil Saidi, Manijeh Bayani-Wolpert, Dr Marian Wenzel, and, most especially, Nahla Nassar, the assistant curator of the Khalili Collection, for helping with various aspects of the cataloguing work; and to the production team who worked so hard to produce these catalogues, Dr Julian Raby, Tim Stanley, Helen and Misha Anikst and Lorna Raby.

Nasser D. Khalili
London 1992

The Abbasid Tradition

Few collections of Islamic calligraphy outside the Muslim world have the breadth necessary to cover the full diversity of this art form over the first four centuries of its history. The Khalili Collection is an exception, for its holdings include a range of written material that has been deliberately chosen in order to illustrate the early development of the Arabic script as it is currently understood. This volume, the first of the general catalogue of the Collection, presents the Qur'anic items amongst this material. Most were written in one of a large group of special scripts which are usually called Kufic but which, for reasons set out below, we have named the Abbasid styles, after the dynasty which held the post of caliph from AD 750 to 1258. From about AD 1000, the place occupied by the Abbasid styles in the copying of the Qur'anic text was usurped over time by scripts generally but not altogether appropriately described as cursive, the most common of which were *muḥaqqaq* and *naskh*.[1] This process took several centuries to complete, and Qur'ans in one of the Abbasid styles were still being produced in the 13th century AD. Because the development of the Abbasid styles was not interrupted by the appearance of Qur'ans in the cursive scripts, and because their development was more or less distinct from that of the cursive scripts, all the Qur'anic material in the Khalili Collection written in these Abbasid styles has been included in this volume.

Most Western histories of Islamic calligraphy have been based on information found in later Arabic, Persian and Turkish sources, in which one word – *kūfī* – was used to encompass all the early scripts. This was no doubt because the calligraphic tradition that had produced the scripts described as *kūfī* had been dead for some time before these sources were compiled, and Qur'ans written in these scripts could no longer be read without great effort. The evidence for this is to be found in the manuscripts themselves: many Qur'ans that can be dated with some certainty to the 3rd century AH (the 9th century AD), for example, have false colophons, which are supposed to have been written in the 1st century AH (the 7th century AD) by the caliphs 'Ali and 'Uthman.[2] These misattributions were possible because the scripts used in these Qur'ans looked so ancient to the Muslims of later periods that they believed they could only have been made in the 1st century. Some manuscripts produced in the 3rd century AH contain notes written some three or four hundred years later by readers eager to record their prowess in dealing with a style no longer used and no longer commonly understood. People even transliterated early Qur'ans into scripts that were more easily comprehensible, as is the case with a manuscript in the Khalili Collection, cat. 43, whose margins contain a transcription of the text in a later, cursive, hand.

The study of these venerable scripts by Western scholars began at the end of the 18th century, when the task of cataloguing the Qur'anic material in the Royal Library in Copenhagen was undertaken by Jacob Georg Christian Adler (1756–1834), a Lutheran cleric from Schleswig whose knowledge of Semitic languages was connected with his study of biblical criticism.[3] Adler attempted to develop a classification system based on the terminology used by Muslims themselves, and, as the Copenhagen material consisted of only five fragments and the range of styles represented was therefore very narrow, he felt justified in applying to them the single term *kūfī* which he had found in the works of Firuzabadi and Ibn Khalliqan. The Copenhagen Qur'ans thus became the first 'Kufic' manuscripts.[4] The term *kūfī* was an unfortunate choice. It was derived from the name of the town of al-Kufah in southern Iraq and originally referred to the style of Arabic script developed there, but we do not know what this style of writing actually looked like. In the years after the appearance of Adler's catalogue in 1780, more examples of early Qur'anic material were made available, and it became obvious that there was a very wide range of early scripts. The publication in 1808 of part of a 10th-century bibliographical

text, the *Fihrist* of Ibn al-Nadim, showed what an enormous diversity of scripts had existed during the first centuries after the Hijrah,[5] but for some time no-one made the connection between this evidence and that provided by the manuscripts.

The first person to attempt to refine Adler's classification by distinguishing between the various styles of Arabic script used in early Qur'ans was the Sicilian orientalist and liberal statesman Michele Amari (1806–1889). The huge success of Amari's history of the Sicilian Vespers, which was filled with anti-Bourbon allusions, meant that he had to flee to Paris, where he lived in exile from 1842 to 1848. His interest in the history of Sicily under Arab rule led him to use this opportunity to learn Arabic, and, when he returned to Paris after the collapse of the constitutional revolution of 1848, he was able to support himself by cataloguing the large collection of early Qur'an fragments in the Bibliothèque Nationale. (These had been acquired in 1833 from the estate of Jean-Louis Asselin de Cherville, dragoman to the French consul general in Cairo from 1806 until his death in 1822.) Amari's notices were included in De Slane's catalogue,[6] and in 1857 he wrote an essay on the history of the Qur'an for the Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres, which was published by Dérenbourg on the centenary of the author's birth. The Sicilian scholar's most significant contribution was his identification of the famous Meccan script, the only style mentioned by Ibn al-Nadim for which a description was given. This is the script that we now call Hijazi.

Amari's efforts at analyzing the stylistic traits of the early Qur'anic scripts were not followed by other studies of this kind. Instead, most work in the field was concentrated on interpreting the Oriental sources that deal with the history of the Arabic script.[7] Essays of the greatest subtlety and penetration were written in an attempt to understand the relationships between scripts that were only names in a list, while the manuscripts themselves were virtually ignored. As a result, no progress was made in resolving the two main problems that should have been addressed, namely the chronology and the typology of the early forms of the Arabic script. In some cases, the situation was made even worse when students of the subject misunderstood the sources and created scripts which had never existed. *Mashq*, for example, is a technique that can be applied to any kind of script and is not an independent style of its own.[8] In making these errors, they ignored Ibn al-Nadim's comment in the *Fihrist* that the Arabic script was remarkable for the extent to which one could make the shapes of the letters larger or smaller at will. Despite these mistakes, most studies made some contribution by helping to build up a corpus of Islamic sources for the history of Arabic script, a useful tool for further research.[9] On the other hand, the few attempts that were made to understand the early history of the Arabic script through study of the manuscripts paid almost no attention to the so-called Kufic scripts. One of the beneficial results of the Qur'an exhibition held at the British Museum in London in 1976 was the new light it shed on the precious remnants of the first Islamic calligraphers' creative powers.[10]

The Nature of the Evidence

Most of the Qur'an material that has come down to us from the period before AD 1000 is in the form of fragments which often consist of no more than a single folio or part of a single folio. In the majority of cases, these fragments come from Qur'ans that were discarded because their condition was too poor for them to continue in use, although some may have been put aside because the script in which they were written could no longer be read with ease. The respect that Muslims pay to the Qur'an as the actual word of God meant that they could not be thrown

away, and they were therefore stored on mosque premises in a place where they would not be subject to unseemly treatment, a practice whose closest parallel is the Jewish custom of storing written material in a *genizah*. The parallel with the *genizah* is particularly strong because of the remarkably large quantities of Qur'an material that were stowed away in this manner: many thousands of fragments were transferred from the Umayyad Mosque in Damascus to what is now the Museum of Turkish & Islamic Arts in Istanbul after the fire of 1893, for example. In Damascus, the Qur'an depository was in one of the small buildings in the courtyard of the mosque,[11] while in the Great Mosque of Kairouan the discarded Qur'ans were placed in a room on the northern side of the courtyard.[12] It is not known exactly where they were kept in the mosque of 'Amr in Cairo, but in the Great Mosque in San'a' a huge cache was found lodged between the roof and the ceiling,[13] and in the shrine of Imam Riza at Mashhad the material was discovered in the section known as the Dar al-Salam.[14]

The limited aims behind this practice – to save the disused Qur'ans from destruction – meant that, once the manuscripts had been deposited in a safe place, they received no further attention. The bindings slowly decayed, and many folios were destroyed by natural causes so that, when the caches were rediscovered in the 19th and 20th centuries, the books had been reduced to amorphous heaps of folios. Since its rediscovery, the material from Damascus has remained largely intact, as has the huge cache of material found in San'a' at the beginning of the 1970s, but this was not always the case. The deposits found in Cairo and in Kairouan, for example, were disposed of piecemeal, with the result that folios from a single manuscript have been scattered in collections all over the world. The early Qur'anic material in the Khalili Collection, like that in the Bibliothèque Nationale, is made up of such fragments, and anyone wishing to assess material of this sort must first collate it with items from the same manuscripts held elsewhere. This task is made more difficult by the lack of reliable sources: catalogues are not always available, and those that are available do not always contain the information required.[15] Nevertheless, the work is worth the effort, since, at the very least, it can improve our understanding of how manuscripts were made in the Islamic world during the Middle Ages. In some instances, it can also help in tracing the history of a manuscript, and it may even allow us to fix the date of production with some degree of certainty.

The codicological and palæographic data which can be assembled by the minute examination of the dispersed fragments are all the more valuable because of the paucity of documentary evidence to be found in early Qur'anic material as compared with later periods. Very few Qur'ans from the first four centuries of the Islamic era contain dated inscriptions, and such inscriptions as do occur are mostly *waqfiyyahs*, which recorded the donation of the manuscript to a mosque or other religious institution. In most cases, *waqfiyyahs* provide no more than a *terminus ad quem* for the production of the manuscript itself, as the act of donation may have taken place some time after the Qur'an was made.[16] The Qur'anic fragments found in Damascus sometimes contain dated inscriptions in the form of records of births and deaths which were placed on what had been the first or last pages of the manuscripts, but these are as difficult to interpret as the *waqfiyyahs*. Colophons are, alas, the least common type of inscription found in Qur'anic manuscripts of this period, and a high proportion of the few examples at our disposal are nothing more than fakes.

Evidence regarding the provenance of early Qur'an manuscripts is even more exiguous. Manuscripts, particularly small manuscripts, are very mobile, and the fact that a Qur'an was found in a particular town is no guarantee that it was written there or that its script or illumina-

tion was characteristic of the town. In other words, if a page of a Qur'an were discovered in al-Kufah and contained no explicit reference to where it was made, we could not presume that the script in which it was written was an example of genuine Kufic. There are many examples of the mobility of Qur'an manuscripts. A Qur'an in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris, for example, was donated to the Great Mosque in Tarsus, on the southern coast of Anatolia, but it was later taken to Egypt, where it was purchased by Asselin de Cherville.[17] Another illustration of this point is provided by the large number of Maghribi manuscripts found among the fragments in the former library of the Umayyad Mosque in Damascus. Some of these were probably brought from North Africa to Syria, but others may have been written in Damascus by Maghribi scholars, travellers or pilgrims, for medieval Muslim scribes were as mobile as the manuscripts they made.[18]

The Arabic Script as a Basis for Classification

If the type of early Qur'an material described above is to be classified in a constructive way, the method employed must take account of the fragmentary and dispersed character of the physical evidence and the small number of explicit references to the time and place of manufacture. One approach would have been to make the study of the textual sources the starting point of our investigation, but the limits of this approach have been shown by the slow progress made by those who have adopted it: they can boast of the identification of only one script in roughly 150 years! The main reason for the failure to identify other scripts is the omission from these sources of descriptions or illustrations of the scripts listed in them, with the exception of Ibn al-Nadim's description of Hijazi. Moreover, this method presupposes that the texts used have been established with complete certainty, but this is not always the case, as Endress has shown with regard to *mā'il*.[19]

We have adopted an alternative approach, relying on a careful analysis of the script in order to build up a typology which can be related to what little external evidence is available. It is true that the palæographic study of the manuscripts has also proceeded slowly, but in this case the lack of progress has been due to the diversity of the evidence available, for the most striking feature of these early manuscripts is the wide range of styles used in writing them. Even when attempts have been made to introduce some order into this subject, they have been confined to small collections, and the conclusions that could be drawn have therefore been rather limited.[20] This stylistic diversity has also given rise to the notion, clearly expressed by Annemarie Schimmel, for example,[21] that there were as many kinds of Kufic as there were manuscripts written in Kufic: under such conditions, scientific analysis is impossible. We hope that the evidence presented below confounds this pessimistic theory.

Anyone engaging in the study of early Qur'an manuscripts has to face the difficulties outlined above and must also contend with the rudimentary nature of our knowledge of the subject, for the task is in its initial stages, and many collections are as yet unexplored. The researcher is therefore obliged to establish the first principles on which the analysis of the script is to be effected. A long-established method employed in the study of Western manuscripts is the grouping of material on the basis of letter shapes. The use of this method is still in its infancy as far as Arabic manuscripts are concerned,[22] but it recommends itself because it is applicable to all the material to be classified and because it is simple enough to be employed in research conditions where a more sophisticated approach would be impractical. In carrying out this palæographical study, we have been careful to bear in mind the structure of the book as a whole,

which also had some influence on the form of the script, but we have depended primarily on an analysis of the external appearance of the letters, the overall proportions of the script, the thickness of the line, and the ductus, by which we mean the manner in which the strokes that constitute the letters were executed. In all instances, this study has been based on concrete and precise examples.

The first step to be taken is to adapt this method to the peculiarities of the Arabic script.[23] The foremost of these is the lack of full autonomy on the part of the individual letters, most of which are connected by ligatures; there is no parallel in the Arabic writing system for the contrast between block letters and cursive that occurs in material written in the Latin alphabet: of the 28 letters in the Arabic script, 22 are always joined to a following letter in the same word, while six are never so joined. Each letter has a maximum of four forms: the independent form, which occurs where the letter is not connected to the letters before and after it; the initial form, which occurs where the letter is only connected to a following letter; the medial form, which occurs where it is connected to both the preceding and the following letter; and the final form, which occurs where it is only joined to the preceding letter. The six letters which are never joined to the following letter (*alif*, *dāl/dhāl*, *rā'/zā'* and *wāw*) have only two of these forms, the independent and the final.

Another significant feature is the discrepancy between the number of phonemes used in the Arabic language (28) and the number of basic letter shapes in the Arabic alphabet (18 in the independent form, but only 15 in the medial form). This shortfall was eventually made good by adding diacritical marks, but, in the early Qur'an manuscripts we have so far examined, we have found no evidence of any attempt to modify the shapes of the letters in order to indicate that they represented a number of different sounds. When the letters *bā'*, *tā'* and *thā'* stand on their own, for example, the basic shape of all three is always the same: it was only the addition of diacriticals that made it possible to distinguish them. When the same three letters occur in the middle of a word, their basic shape – a short vertical stroke – is the same as that of *nūn* and *yā'*. When three of these five letters appeared in a row, as in the word *baynahum,* there was a limited attempt to differentiate between them by varying the heights of the three strokes. This precluded any confusion with the letters *sīn* and *shīn*, which are both written at the beginning and in the middle of a word as three short vertical strokes of equal height.

The large number of homographs in the Arabic alphabet makes it unnecessary to include all forms of the 28 letters in any comparison of letter shapes. The fragmentary character of the material to be classified also makes it advisable to limit the number of letters selected for comparison, as not all the letters will necessarily occur in any one item. Furthermore, the restricted size of the sample means that the shapes selected should be those that display the most significant variations. With these criteria in mind, the following six letter forms have been selected as the basis of a first stage in our understanding of the early history of the Arabic script: the independent and final forms of *alif*; the medial form of *'ayn/ghayn*; the final form of *mīm*; the final form of *nūn*; and the medial form of *hā'*. The final form of *'ayn/ghayn* has also been used on occasion; where no final *nūn* occurs, the flourish at the end of final *sīn/shīn* or *ṣād/ḍād* has been used instead; and other letters have been used to refine the typology where necessary.

Although the comparison of letter shapes has formed the principal means for developing the classification system for early Qur'anic scripts used here, the other features mentioned above have also been taken into account. As regards the thickness of the line, the degree to which an example may be perceived as thick or thin is, of course, difficult to determine objectively and

must be assessed in terms of the overall dimensions of a script, as a stroke 5 mm wide will appear thicker in the case of an *alif* 20mm high than in one 50mm high. When dealing with some letters, such as *dāl* and *ṣād*, one must also take into account the licence given to the calligrapher to extend the horizontal strokes of the letter form in order to occupy more space in the line. This device, which did not modify the basic shape of the letter, was one of the components of *mashq*, the technique of varying the lengths of the horizontal strokes within and between letters. Other letter forms could be extended vertically, as in line 1 of cat.55 below. Features such as the varying thickness of the ductus and the use of *mashq* both within the letter forms and in the ligatures which connect them affect the overall appearance of the script, as does the general way in which the letters have been composed within the line and even within the text area of the page; they make it necessary to consider the general appearance of a script and not just the letter forms in isolation.

Our purpose has therefore been to develop a typology of script styles, principally by the comparison of a limited number of letter shapes, and to use this typology as a point of reference in describing the contents of the present Collection. The task is made easier by the presence of colour plates, and the descriptions should merely draw the reader's attention to the salient features of the script. However, a problem of method has presented itself: in the course of describing the scripts, we have naturally tended to refer to a type observed in the best manuscripts, minimizing the scribe's lapses, without ignoring them completely, and concentrating on constant factors. As a result, we have found it necessary to develop a model that takes account of variations from the norm. As a working hypothesis, we have decided to consider each cluster of scripts as a circle, whose centre is occupied by the manuscripts showing the greatest care, the greatest skill and the greatest regularity. The further one goes from the centre, the more examples one finds in which the scribe has only loosely reproduced the letter shapes that distinguish the 'ideal' form of the script. This reflects what we have observed in the course of cataloguing all the manuscripts which we think belong to the same group on palæographical grounds, namely that not all reach the same level of perfection. This judgement is, of course, the present writer's: we do not know, or we know only to a limited extent and indirectly, how this early calligraphy was seen and appreciated by contemporaries.

As a result of the palæographic examination of the visible evidence, we have been able to identify three main groups among the early Qur'anic scripts represented in the Khalili Collection. The first of these is the script identified by Michele Amari on the basis of the summary description given by Ibn al-Nadim in the *Fihrist*; Abbott called this script Hijazi, after the region of north-west Arabia where Mecca and Medina lie.[24] The other two groups are more difficult to define. They encompass the scripts that have until now been called by the inappropriate names of Kufic in one case and Eastern Kufic in the other. We prefer to call them all Abbasid and to distinguish between the two groups as the Early Abbasid styles, of which we have so far identified six, and the New Style. The scripts in the first group are identified by the letters A TO F, while those in the second are identified by the letters NS. Where the main styles in these groups have been subdivided into types, they have been identified by Roman numerals, as D.I, D.II and D.III, for example. In a few cases, we have had to distinguish between varieties of these types, and the sub-types, such as C.Ia or D.vb, are indicated by the addition of a lower case letter to the code. The same process of subdivision has also been applied to Hijazi, which is represented by the letter H for this purpose. The letters and numbers do not grade the scripts, nor attempt a chronological sequence, and the system is open to new additions, as we must expect

further discoveries in the field. It also allows for the discovery of hybrid styles, such as that used in cat. 40 below.[25]

The Structure of Early Abbasid Qur'ans

The revelation of the Qur'an in the early 7th century AD and the formation of a distinctive Muslim civilization in the years that followed gave a new and unprecedented importance to the Arabic language, which had previously been confined to the desert zone south of the Fertile Crescent and the adjoining cultivated areas. Arabic became the language of a great religion and of a great civilization, and the spoken and written forms began to be used in a vast belt stretching from the Atlantic to western India. Both the religion and the civilization depended on the written word for their propagation and perpetuation, and this gave rise to a period of intense creativity during which the norms for the production of Arabic books were fixed then transmitted all over the Islamic world. The norms established during this period – the 7th and 8th centuries AD – grew out of the bookmaking traditions current in the Middle East before the rise of Islam. Papyrus and parchment were the main materials available for the construction of books, and it seems that parchment soon prevailed, at least in the case of Qur'ans.[26] Parchment retained its predominance for at least five centuries in the eastern half of the Islamic world and until the 14th century in the Maghrib. In the East, paper became available as an alternative at an early date, but its use for Qur'ans was resisted for some time, and the earliest Qur'an on paper that bears a date was produced in the first half of the 10th century AD.

Parchment is the skin of an animal which has been cured and then scraped to remove any remaining fat or flesh from the inside, sanded, stretched taut, and dried. The aim was to prepare both sides of the skin for writing and, in the process, to make the two sides of the skin alike. Nevertheless, it is generally easy to distinguish the hair side from the flesh side: the traces of the scraping of the flesh side can often be detected, for example. In this respect, cat. 41 below is an exception. While it is usually possible to tell the two sides apart, it is never easy to tell what animal was used. Sheep and goat skins seem to have been the most commonly available, but we have not been able to identify any examples of the gazelle parchment to which many sources – both Eastern and Western – refer. Before it was used, the parchment was sometimes dyed. This practice, which was not limited to the Islamic world, is represented in the Collection by a fragment of the famous Blue Qur'an (cat. 42) and another dyed orange-red (cat. 11).

In Classical antiquity books were produced in two principal formats, the roll (*volumen*) and the bound codex, but by the time of the Muslim conquest, the codex had the upper hand, and the number of books being made in roll form was relatively small.[27] The codex form was adopted by the Muslims, and the Qur'ans that seem the most ancient, those in Hijazi script, are usually codices with the dimensions we would consider normal for most books, both ancient and modern: they are taller than they are wide. At some point, however, Qur'an codices began to be made so that they were wider than they were tall, and this horizontal format continued to be employed until at least the 10th century AD. The change of format was not accidental, but it was not linked to the nature of the material used or to any technical change. Aesthetic considerations may have been a factor, and it has been suggested that the introduction of the new format was a response to the more horizontal emphasis of the so-called Kufic scripts in which these oblong Qur'ans were written. The reason for the change may equally have been the need to give an immediately recognizable shape to the Qur'an so as to underline its unique status as the word of God. Manuscripts written in the Abbasid scripts were also produced in the vertical

format, and the evidence provided by the fragments in the Khalili Collection suggests that the return to the vertical format was the result of the use of paper in Qur'an production.

The number of examples in Hijazi is so small that no definite conclusions can be reached about the structure of the manuscripts from which they came, and the following remarks apply only to the far larger sample of manuscripts in the Early Abbasid scripts. (The extensive changes in Islamic manuscript production which began at the end of the 9th century AD are reflected in New Style Qur'ans; they are discussed in the essay that introduces these New Style scripts, pages 132–137.) The basic unit of the early Qur'anic manuscript was the quire, which was almost always composed of five parchment bifolios. For these bifolios to be turned into a quire of ten folios, they were folded along their central vertical axis and were then sewn together along the crease (see figure 1). The arrangement of the bifolios within the quire was quite different from that employed in the contemporary Christian West. In the West, it was standard to make flesh sides face flesh sides and hair sides face hair sides in an open quire, an arrangement that has become known as Gregory's rule,[28] whereas Muslims arranged the bifolios with the flesh sides uppermost. As a result, openings that consisted of the last page of one quire and the first page of the next always had two hair sides; the central opening of the quire always had two flesh sides; and the other openings consisted of a hair side facing a flesh side or *vice versa*.[29] There are rare exceptions to this rule, but at present it is impossible to say whether they are the result of some regional practice, for example, or merely a matter of chance. The standard arrangement of flesh sides and hair sides within the quires gave most openings within a book an unbalanced appearance, as they combined a flesh side and a hair side; the craftsmen responsible for preparing the parchment were seldom able to eliminate the difference in look between the two sides, as they did in the case of cat. 41. Given the importance of the concept of the double page in Islamic art, it is surprising that virtually no attempt was made to arrange the folios in another way so as to achieve a more satisfying solution. The current state of research does not allow us to say whether this way of arranging the bifolios within the quire was inherited from an earlier book culture or was developed by Islamic artists themselves.

In the West, as a corollary to Gregory's rule, the quire was obtained by folding the dressed hide once (*in folio*), twice (*in quarto*), three times (*in octavo*) or more, thus producing one, two, four or more sets of bifolios.[30] As the quires of Islamic manuscripts were almost always composed of an uneven number of bifolios, the quires could not be produced by folding a dressed hide, and the habit of assembling all the bifolios of a quire with the flesh side uppermost also excluded this possibility. We must therefore conclude that the parchment was first cut into bifolios. Those required for the horizontal format were very long rectangles – almost strips – of parchment, and the natural size and shape of the hide made it difficult to obtain ten bifolios from a single skin. Parchment was expensive, and the craftsmen responsible for making the quires had to avoid any wastage when the hide was cut into elongated oblongs. They did this by trimming the offcuts to make smaller bifolios or to make single folios that were arranged in pairs and used instead of bifolios in a ten-folio quire. From the available evidence, we may presume that the procedure for compiling a quire using some single folios went something like this: the craftsman took, say, four bifolios and folded them in two; he then took two of the single folios, which were slightly longer than half a bifolio, and folded them near one end so as to form a folio of the correct size and a short flap of the type seen in cat. 49; he then inserted the two folios opposite one another in a quire – as folios 3 and 8, for example – as though they were a true bifolio; and, finally, he sewed the four bifolios and the two folios together (see figure 2).

A limited examination of one group of manuscripts shows that only about a quarter of the quires were made of five bifolios, approximately 40 per cent used four bifolios and two isolated folios, and the remaining 35 per cent incorporated up to eight isolated folios in a quire (see figure 3).[31] It is interesting to note that, although this practice would have permitted quires with any number of leaves, on the whole the makers of the quires remained faithful to the ten-folio format and to the disposition of hair and flesh sides explained above. We may conclude from these observations that the making of a book was divided into a number of tasks performed by different craftsmen. The copyist may well have used ready-made quires bought from an artisan who specialized in the management of the parchment, and these artisans may have been the *warrāqs* referred to in Arabic sources.[32]

The make-up of quires in Qur'ans written in the Early Abbasid scripts

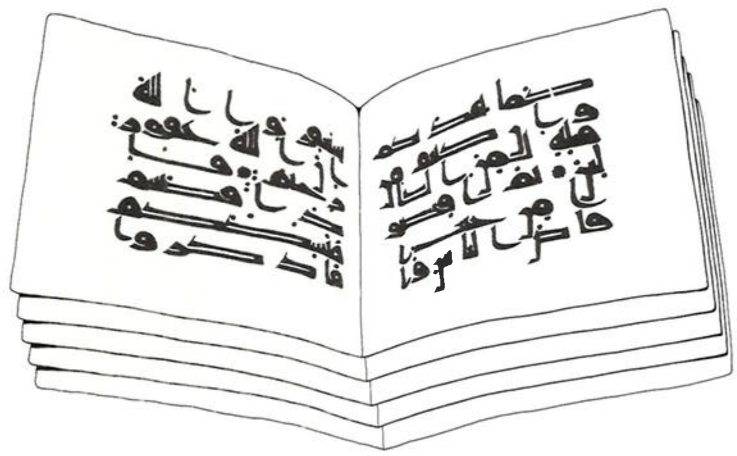


Figure 1

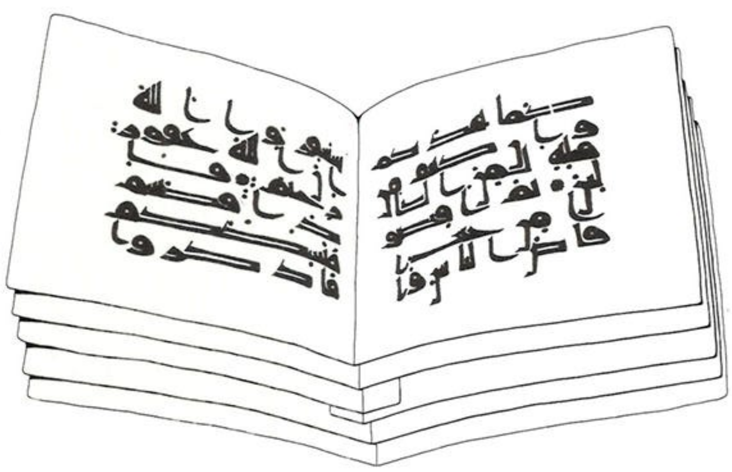


Figure 2

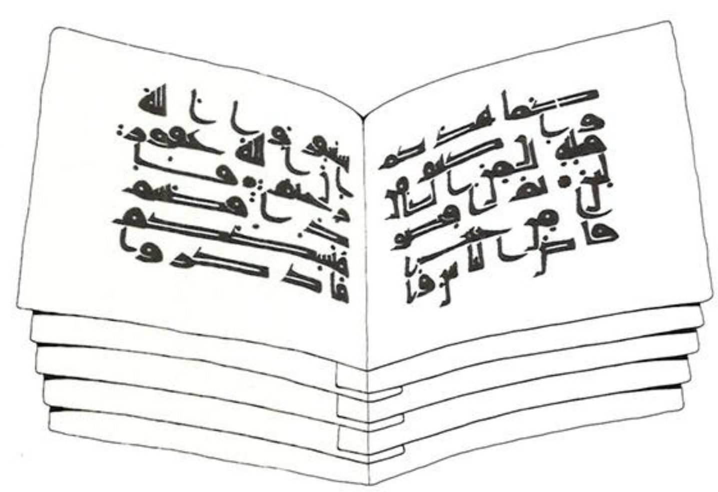


Figure 3

Bindings

Few early bindings have survived. An important group was found in the Great Mosque of Kairouan with the Qur'an fragments mentioned above,[33] but other examples are scattered in libraries all over the world.[34] The extant examples consist of wooden boards covered in leather. In most of the cases we know of, the bookbinder used at least two pieces of leather, one covering the boards and the spine, and the other glued on to the inner cover of the lower board to make a case to protect the sides of the text block.[35] Leather straps attached to the foredge of the upper cover (the short side in the case of Qur'ans produced in a horizontal format) were used to secure the book shut, and there were sometimes straps of the same type in the middle of the long sides of the upper cover. In all cases, a metal nail was hammered into the edge of the lower board facing the straps so that they could be tied round it and the book closed.[36] The leather of the binding was sometimes left plain, but more often it was tooled. To judge from what we now see, the inner faces of the boards were covered with a sheet of parchment, and nails with large heads were frequently hammered on to the outer faces of the two boards in order to protect the leather surface of the covers against rubbing, a common practice in the Middle Ages.[37]

The main problem that faced the bookbinder was to find the best way of keeping the text block and the covers together, as the weight of the wooden boards put a great deal of stress on the means of attachment. Nevertheless, it is quite common to find manuscripts in which the first folio of the first quire and the last folio of the last quire have been glued to the upper and lower boards respectively. This solution seems to have been inadequate, for most manuscripts have a second spine whose function was either to reinforce the original spine or to replace it after it had been broken, and we occasionally find that a piece of string has been used to tie the two boards together and has been run through the stitches that hold the quires together in order to strengthen the whole.

Ruling

Ruling is the system of horizontal, vertical, oblique or circular lines drawn on the page before the copying of a text or the execution of a decorative scheme, with the purpose of allowing the scribe or artist a planned layout. The ruling was usually effected with a dry point, but black lead and ink were also used on occasion. When a dry point was employed, it left a furrow on one side of the leaf and a mark in relief on the other.[38] We know that the practice was current at the time the oldest fragments in Hijazi script were copied, because traces of it can be found on examples such as cat. 1. On the other hand, very few examples in the Early Abbasid scripts bear clearly legible marks caused by ruling – cat. 42 below is a rare exception. This absence is rather disconcerting, firstly because ruling was employed relatively frequently in the preparation of contemporary illumination, and secondly because the dimensions of the text area indicate that, in some cases at least, the space was constructed according to the rules of geometry.[39]

We have already had occasion to demonstrate that a group of manuscripts in the B.II style show a strong tendency for the length of the text area to be two-thirds the width, and it is possible that these proportions bear some relationship to the Arabic term *thuluthayn*.[40] The quotient of the width divided by the height is 1.5, which is that of the geometric figure known as the double rectangle of Pythagoras. This remarkable rectangle is easy to calculate, and it reappears with some frequency in the material in the Khalili Collection: the text area in cat. 15, cat. 17, cat. 41 and cat. 42 seem to have been constructed on these lines, and it should be noted that two of these were copied in the D.IV style. Even allowing for a margin of error, other examples – cat. 32 and 37 (both in D.IV), cat. 9 (in B.II) and cat. 44 (in C.II) – are less clear and need

Individual verse markers from the early Qur'anic material in the Khalili Collection. Illustrated on pages 21, 22, 23



1.1.1
Several oblique strokes, arranged one above the other



1.1.2
A single row of oblique strokes



1.1.3
Two rows of oblique strokes



1.1.3
Two rows of oblique strokes



1.1.4
Three oblique strokes, arranged in a triangle



2.1.1
Three dots, arranged in a triangle



2.1.4
Six oval dots, arranged in two horizontal rows

to be treated with caution. Despite the difficulties presented by this way of approaching the scripts, one cannot fail to notice a number of striking coincidences: a group of fragments in D.III (cat. 26, 27, 30, 31 and 35, in particular) have a text area in the form of a double square, for example, and a predeliction for the formula $a \times a\sqrt{3}$ is apparent in fragments in E. We should also note that in fragments that can be presumed to be relatively early on the basis of palæographic criteria, such as cat. 6 (in B.I) and cat. 66 (in F), the text area was constructed on a different set of proportions, those of the rectangle of Pythagoras, with a quotient of 1.333.

Given the present state of research, it is difficult to come to any firm conclusions regarding the methods by which copyists of manuscripts in the Early Abbasid scripts developed the page layouts they used. Geometric formulae similar to those set out above were employed in more recent periods,[41] and we can only suppose that they were already in use in the 9th century AD, even if the texts do not provide any information in this regard. The archæology of early Qur'an material has revealed two factors that may provide some support for this hypothesis. One is the importance of geometry in the preparation of the illumination.[42] The other is the possibility that letter forms were not the only criterion used in defining a particular style of script, for the dimensions of the script also seem to have played a role. It therefore seems logical that calligraphers who seem to have established a link between scripts and their dimensions would have widened this concept to take in the page as a whole by defining the written surface in terms of a set of proportions.

The hypothesis that a script was defined by a set of rules governing its proportions as well as by the shapes of the letters and that geometrical formulae played a part in the design process is supported by evidence that great importance was attached to the size of script. By studying two particular scripts, B.II and D.I (see Tables II and IV), in some detail, we have been able to show that the number of lines to the page and the height of the script were strictly controlled.[43] Roughly 78 per cent of D.I manuscripts had between five and nine lines to the page, while 75 per cent of our sample of B.II Qur'ans had between 14 and 16 lines to the page; in the first case, the average height of a single line was between 11 and 22 mm, while in the second it was between 5 and 6 mm. Calligraphers did occasionally adapt a script to an unusual format, as in cat. 23. This fragment was written in a form of D.I, a script developed for use on a relatively large scale but modified in this case to fit the reduced size of the line. The notion of a geometric basis for page design finds some confirmation in the discovery of Qur'anic manuscripts in which the calligrapher has organized the script to create geometric patterns.[44]

These findings demonstrate two things. Firstly, they show that the calligraphers of the Abbasid period must have been using a form of ruling which has left no visible mark on the parchment, and, secondly, they prove the need to take the full measure of the complexity of early Islamic calligraphy. It is clear that we need to search for the origins of this strictly regulated art form in early periods that are still very obscure.

Illumination

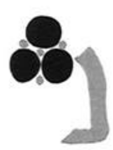
It is still difficult to estimate the proportion of early Qur'an manuscripts that contained illumination. In the case of the cache of Qur'anic material found in the Great Mosque of San'a', a figure of 12.5 per cent has been suggested.[45] Illumination was always used to mark the various divisions of the Qur'anic text. This is as true of the modest type of illumination attempted in some Hijazi manuscripts as it was of the more complex forms developed after the introduction of the first Abbasid styles in the 8th century AD. Although the illumination in the later examples



2.2.1
A single gold dot



2.2.3A
Three gold dots, arranged in a triangle



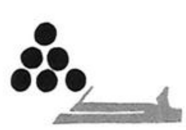
2.2.3B
Three gold dots, arranged in a triangle, with coloured dots added



2.2.3C
Three gold dots outlined in ink, arranged in a triangle



2.2.3D
Three gold dots outlined in ink, arranged in a triangle, with coloured dots added



2.2.4A
Six gold dots, arranged in a triangle

was always related to the way in which the text was divided and never occurred without a function, it was sometimes more elaborate than was strictly necessary. The main sources of inspiration were geometry, the plant life of the Middle East, and architectural motifs. Geometry provided the basic structure of the more elaborate compositions, and even plant-based motifs were stylized, simplified and subjected to a kind of geometrical reconstruction.

A close study of the illumination in early Qur'anic manuscripts reveals that the artist often drew an outline as a first step, particularly in the case of full-page designs, whether in horizontal or vertical. Ruling never entirely disappeared, even if no traces of it can be found on the written surface. This raises the question of whether the illuminator and the calligrapher were the same person, as was often the case in later periods. We cannot be certain, for there is evidence pointing in both directions. What we can say is that, if they were different people, they must have worked together or used the same proportions, because, within a given manuscript, the decorated area on pages that contain only illumination usually has the same dimensions as the written area on pages with text, as if they were both conceived according to the same rules.

The junctures in the text marked by ornament, whether simple or elaborate, included those between two verses, those between two surahs, those between two larger sections of the text, such as thirtieths (*ajzā'*), and those at the beginning and end of the text as a whole. The illuminated manuscript is visibly articulated by these elements, most of which are situated within the text area. The exceptions are the illuminated pages at the beginning and end of the text and the illuminated projections – notably palmettes – and frames that have invaded the margins around the text. The projections either explain or emphasize information already inserted in the written area, while the frames provide a protective surround for the text or emphasize a division within it.

Verse markers were of two types, those placed after each individual verse (*āyah*), and those placed after groups of five or ten verses. The markers used for individual verses underwent an evolution from purely utilitarian device to functional ornament. The groups of dots used in Hijazi manuscripts such as cat. 1, and the clusters of short strokes employed in Qur'ans such as cat. 17, which was produced a little later, were all made by the copyist with his pen; they were replaced by circular motifs often derived from the devices used to indicate the end of groups of ten verses, the origin of which is unknown. Verse markers of this new type can be categorized as illumination, as they were made using colours as well as ink. The specialized techniques required for the execution of such ornament eventually led to the emergence of specialist craftsmen, and this, of course, had an effect on the cost of the manuscripts. We can get some idea of the relative expense of having a Qur'an illuminated from the large number of Qur'ans that were not illuminated, and we can also note that some markers were rendered in yellow paint rather than gold.[46] The appearance of illuminated Qur'ans seems to have had a detrimental effect on the practice of marking the ends of verses, for, if we can rely on the material already published, it appears that the use of verse markers was more frequent in Hijazi Qur'ans than in those of the B.II group, and it would seem from this that it had become the custom in the 3rd century AH for the ends of verses to be marked either by an illumination or not at all.

Non-geometrical dividers are rare. The only exception is the use of letters that indicate the number of verses according to the *abjad* system, especially the use of a 'Kufic' *hā'* to mark groups of five verses, but even this element was transformed almost beyond recognition. Starting with the simple rubricated circle used to mark the end of every tenth verse, circular shapes became the most commonly used geometric devices for marking both individual verses



3.1.1
A rosette



3.1.2
A rosette with coloured dots



3.1.4
A rosette inscribed within a circle, with coloured dots

Markers for five verses



A Kufic *hā'*



A pear-shaped ornament



An *alif* in two colours, outlined in red

and groups of verses (see Table 1).[47] Those used to separate individual verses have been given a code which features three Arabic numerals (1.1.1, for example). The first numeral tells you whether the device consists of strokes (1), dots (2), or a rosette (3); the second tells you whether the marker was executed in ink (1) or colour (2); and the third identifies the particular type. The codes for markers used to separate groups of verses consist of an Arabic numeral, a letter and a Roman numeral (1.A.II, for instance). The Arabic numeral tells you whether the marker is a simple circle (1), a medallion with a petal border in which there are spaces between the petals (2) or a variant (2'), or a medallion with a border of large petals (3) or small petals (4). The letters show whether the device is in its simplest form (A), has coloured dots decorating its petals (B), is surrounded by an outer circle (C) or contains an inner circle (D). The Roman numeral I indicates that there are no dots around the device, while II shows that dots are present.

The way in which surahs were separated varied greatly.[48] An empty space was sometimes left between two surahs, as in cat. 71, where the title is a later addition, but in most cases one of the two main options was employed. In the first, exemplified by cat. 7, the space between the two surahs has been taken over by illumination, while in the second, the juncture between the two surahs is occupied by information about either the preceding or following surah. This could include the title, the number of verses, the place of revelation or the chronology or a combination of any of these. The two options were sometimes combined, in which case the information was inserted into the illumination, as in cat. 17.

An increasingly important element of Islamic illumination at this early stage was the use of the vignette, a composite ornament placed in the margin, as an extension of the main body of the illumination. The vignette, which was oriented towards the edge of the page, marked the presence of the rest of the illumination within the text area and thus emphasized the information that the main illumination carried. By comparing examples in the Khalili Collection, we can observe the evolution of the vignette from a motif that was comparatively realistic in inspiration, as in cat. 3 and cat. 17, for example, to one more distant from nature, as in cat. 44.

Some Qur'an manuscripts contain a decorative composition (or several – see cat. 24 and 67) that filled a double-page spread at the beginning or the end of the volume. If one excludes the rare examples of this type of illumination that occur in vertical-format Qur'ans,[49] those that we find in manuscripts in the Early Abbasid scripts usually take the form of a rectangle wider than it is high, and the use of a surface with this shape was the main problem faced by illuminators of the period. They generally created designs that were both symmetrical and autonomous. The symmetry worked at two levels: the composition was organized along the horizontal and vertical axes, and it was repeated on both pages of the double-page spread, which produced a mirror effect. The internal symmetry of the composition had the effect of emphasizing its autonomous, self-sufficient character, for a complementary relationship between the two pages did not develop until later.[50] The fact that the design was closed in on itself reinforced its autonomous appearance, for, unlike later compositions, which seem to be a fraction of an infinite pattern, these earlier examples are entirely contained within the rectangle that frames them. In some cases – cat. 24, folios 1b–2a and 98b–99a, for example – the illuminator has deliberately placed different designs on facing pages, while remaining true to the principles of internal symmetry and self-sufficiency.

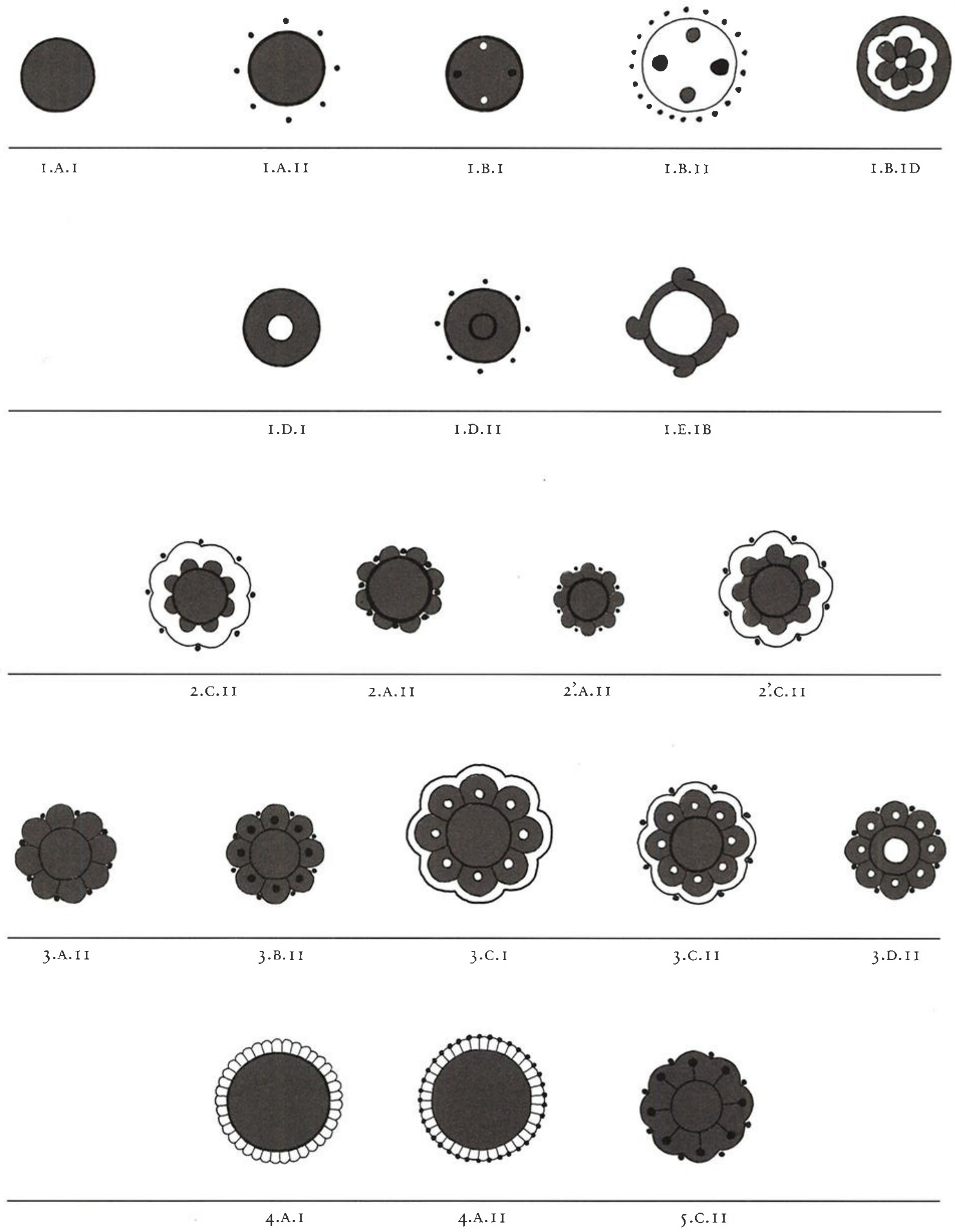
The element of symmetry in these compositions would lead us to expect that they were constructed along geometric lines, and an examination of the preparatory ruling that formed the framework of the design shows that this was indeed the case.[51] The rectangle was often used as

it was (cat. 67 and 73), but attempts were sometimes made to create a field that was easier to manage by dividing it into two squares placed side by side,[52] or a square flanked by two rectangles disposed vertically (cat. 59, folios 1a and 69a). The square was later replaced by a circle, a substitution that was easy to effect but was used relatively rarely.[53] The frame was sometimes extended so that the space it contained was restructured according to a specific rhythm. In cat. 73, for example, the field is divided in three along both the horizontal and vertical axes. Together with the symmetry employed, this partitioning of the field bears witness to the 'geometric spirit' of Abbasid illumination.

It was not a question of simple solutions. The taste for geometric prowess was satisfied by the more subtle designs that appeared in the more carefully executed examples. Some of the elements of these designs appear to be a combination of elementary figures but are in fact complex: one thinks of the loops described by golden fillets to which the task of dividing the space into smaller units was so often devolved.[54]

To fill the field or the surfaces delimited by the passage of fillets, the illuminators only exceptionally had recourse to calligraphy, which was difficult to reconcile with their quest for symmetry. They preferred simple forms which seem to have been derived from Classical mosaics,[55] interlace patterns that one also finds in contemporary bindings,[56] or yet stylized vegetal motifs. Frequently, these elements contrasted in their orientation with the horizontal and vertical lines that formed the basis of the framework of the decoration. It is not, however, the only rupture which they established: the colours constitute another resource which the illuminator had the possibility of exploiting. The use of gold, often associated with the geometric component, is heightened by touches of green, of red and, more rarely, of blue, in the form of dots, strokes, etc. It is not rare to find rinceaux drawn in sepia or plant forms reserved on coloured grounds.[57]

Table 1
Ornamental devices used to mark groups of ten verses in the early Qur'anic material in the Khalili Collection



Catalogue

The Hijazi Script

In his bibliographical work, the *Fihrist,* the 10th-century Baghdadi scholar Ibn al-Nadim gave an account of the early forms of the Arabic script. In this he stated that 'for the *alifs* of the scripts of Makkah and al-Madinah, there is a turning of the hand to the right and lengthening of the strokes, one form having a slight slant.'[1] In the middle of the 19th century, Michele Amari used this text to identify examples of the Meccan script, and almost a century later Nabia Abbott gave scripts of this type the more general name of Hijazi, the Hijaz being the region of western Arabia where both Mecca and Medina lie.[2] Although the number of Qur'an fragments written in the thin, slanting strokes typical of Hijazi is small, they display a great variety of styles. It is not clear, however, whether this was because the Arabic script was still in search of its identity, or whether styles were already very numerous, as they were in later times. The fragments all have an air of considerable antiquity about them, and it may be that their very age is one reason for their scarcity. The account of Ibn al-Nadim gives some weight to the idea that Hijazi was in use during the 1st and early 2nd centuries AH, for in his time this style of script was associated with the holiest period of Islamic history. It is even possible that the Hijazi fragments have survived as pious relics.

Further evidence of the antiquity of Hijazi can be obtained by comparing it with texts written in the Arabic alphabet before the rise of Islam and during the first decades after the Hijrah. The earliest are a number of inscriptions in stone from the 6th century AD, all of which were discovered in what is now the Syrian Arab Republic.[3] In these, the basic shapes of the letters are more or less constant and are roughly the same as those used in Hijazi.[4] We may conclude from this that the first Muslim scribes had a relatively well-defined set of characters at their disposal. Even in these very short texts, however, there are variations in the letter forms. These variations are not great, but they show that the rules of the script had not yet been codified. During the 7th century, the situation remained moderately fluid. Inscriptions show that attempts were made to regularize the Arabic script and to turn it into a vehicle suitable for the decoration of such outstanding monuments as the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem, whose inscriptions date from the 690s. The success of these experiments was no doubt partly responsible for, and also partly influenced by, the decision of the caliph 'Abd al-Malik to make Arabic the chancery language of his empire, which he did in AD 697.[5] At the other extreme were the rapidly executed, rather coarse hands employed by scribes writing on papyrus. These may be considered cursive styles in that they had been adapted as far as possible to the natural movements of the hand, and so to economy of effort.[6] As Grohmann has shown, there were fairly close links between documents written on papyrus and some manuscripts in Hijazi, which must therefore be understood in relation to the cursive, taking into account the variations and irregularities in a script used for everyday purposes.[7] Indeed, we may infer from Ibn al-Nadim's account in the *Fihrist* that the Meccan and Medinan hands were used in these towns before the rise of Islam, very probably for purely utilitarian purposes.[8] Hijazi was not unaffected by the trends illustrated by the monumental inscriptions, for the Hijazi manuscripts show that the scribes who wrote them sometimes made a deliberate attempt to refine the original repertory of forms. Underlying these refinements was an æsthetic that would be exploited more fully in the development of the Early Abbasid scripts.

The number of fragments in Hijazi is so small, and the fragments themselves are usually so short, that no precise description of the script used in an individual example may be given, for the extent of variation within a particular hand cannot be defined with any certainty. The fluctuations observed in these hands suggest that the copyists were more concerned with the

transmission of the Qur'anic text than with the external appearance of their work. The hand of cat. 1 below provides a particularly clear illustration of this first stage in the development of Qur'anic calligraphy, and it may be compared with other folios from the same manuscript in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris and the Vatican Library. The number of lines to the page varies between 22 and 26 in this material, which suggests that each page was written without much preparation, but the presence of ruling on some pages somewhat undermines this conclusion. The long, thin vertical strokes help to give the script an extenuated appearance. As a result of a deliberate choice, there is a clear contrast between *alif*, which always leans to the right, and *lām*, which is vertical. In the independent form, *alif* has a short return at the base, and the careful spacing between the two *lāms* in the word *Allāh* should also be noted. The movement of the pen has not been disguised, and the formation of the ligatures can be clearly traced. This is particularly so in the case of the medial form of *'ayn*, whose characteristic V shape is marked by a slight re-entrant at the intersection of the two antennae. The same is true for the initial and medial forms of *hā'*, in which the bar varies between an almost vertical position and a marked inclination to the left. The 'eyes' of the letter are very clear, while in the final form the loop is extended horizontally. The circular *mīm* already presages a round final form; in the Khalili fragment, this has a vertical tail which is often tiny. Final and independent *nūn* and other letters with similar endings show some variation in their shape. As a rule, they are curved, but the part below the characteristic 'tuck'– the short stroke that rises above the base line – was rendered in different ways. Similar variations may be observed in the final form of *yā'* (see cat. 1).

Having considered the variations within a single Hijazi manuscript, we must now turn to variations between manuscripts or, where we are fortunate, between groups of manuscripts. The differences in the letter forms within the body of Hijazi material suggest that several different styles of writing coexisted, and a tentative identification can be made of four principal varieties; this typology is, of course, open to amendment. Cat. 1 is an example of Hijazi I, and the hand of cat. 2 is a modified form of it: it still has the extenuated appearance typical of Hijazi, but there is greater regularity, the letter forms being more precisely defined. Other notable features of cat. 2 are the more pronounced base line, the consistent horizontal ruling and the horizontal format. Hijazi II, which is more generally known as *mā'il* on the basis of the description in Ibn al-Nadim, has the characteristic sloping *alif*, but here it lacks the return at the base. The best known example is OR.MS.2165 in the British Library.[9] Hijazi III is known from MS.arab.330a in the Bibliothèque Nationale, while Hijazi IV is the style of cat. 3 below, which, like cat. 2, is in the horizontal rather than the vertical format. Hijazi III and IV are less extenuated, more 'plump' than their predecessors. In these scripts, independent *alif* has a longish return; final *mīm*, with its horizontal tail, looks as though it has been flattened; *nūn* consists of three identifiable elements; and the bar of *hā'* and the indentation of *bā'* are oriented in the same direction as *alif*, whereas they had formerly run in the opposite direction. A style closely related to these Hijazi scripts is B.Ia, which may have been the prototype of B.Ib. Like cat. 2, B.Ia has the extenuated appearance of Hijazi but is more regular.

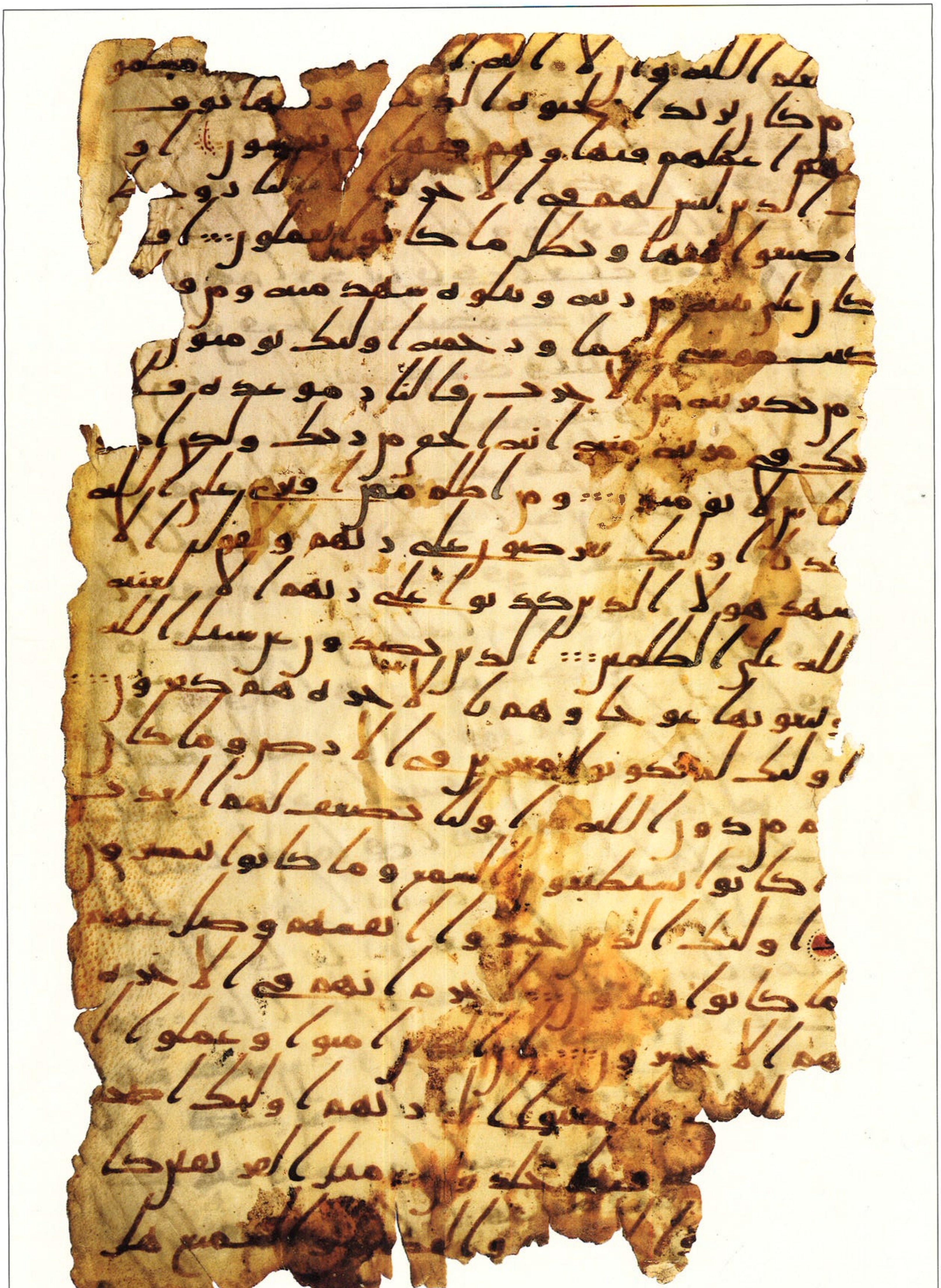
These observations, although far from exhaustive, enable us to make some more general remarks. Hijazi was certainly employed for copying the Qur'an in the 7th century AD and may have continued to be used in the 8th, especially since it enjoyed the incomparable prestige of being directly connected with the beginnings of Islam.[10] The letter forms found in the oldest examples – among them cat. 1 – vary from one fragment to another, but it is not clear whether this was the result of differences in local practice, such as those that divided Meccan and

Medinan usage for example, or merely of differences between the work of one scribe and another. The repertory of graphic forms found in this early manuscript material underwent a gradual process of standardization. Cat. 2 doubtless reflects this phase, which may have coincided with the first attempts to introduce the horizontal format. This process eventually produced the Early Abbasid scripts, but some Qur'an material produced after the 7th century, such as cat. 3, combines elements of both the Hijazi and the Early Abbasid traditions. It may be that some calligraphers who were working within the later tradition were influenced by the prestige of the earlier Hijazi script and incorporated some of its characteristic features, such as the slant, into their work. The orthography of Hijazi manuscripts was also subject to considerable variation: there is no vocalization in either cat. 1 or cat. 2, for example, while diacriticals are much more common in cat. 2. If we compare the long vowels used in these fragments with the *scriptio plena* of the Cairo edition, we see that *scriptio defectiva,* as when *qala* was written instead of *qāla,* was frequently used in the Hijazi material.[11]

The decoration of Hijazi manuscripts was quite modest: rough geometrical bands were drawn in ink between the surahs, and groups of dots or small lines were placed between the verses. At first sight, cat. 3 might seem to be an exception, but the later date to which it must be assigned explains the richer palette and the slightly more elaborate vocabulary of motifs.

The fragmentary state of the manuscripts and the small number of examples that survive has prevented us from making any comparisons – except as regards format – between the codicological aspects of the Hijazi material and those of the Qur'ans written in the Early Abbasid scripts, which survive in far greater numbers and in much better physical condition. It would also be easier to understand the development of Islamic manuscript production at this early date if we had more solid information about other Middle Eastern traditions. The following conclusions can therefore only be provisional. As we have seen, parchment was well established as the most common writing material by the 7th century AD, and the codex had taken over from the roll by the 4th century.[12] Both were adopted by Islamic copyists. A vertical format was used in what appears to be the oldest Hijazi material. The horizontal format was also used, but the few examples we have seem to be in later forms of Hijazi, and they probably appeared when this format was already well established. The quires of the volume to which cat. 1 belonged seem to have conformed to what is known as Gregory's rule, as the hair sides face each other, which was not the case in later Qur'ans.[13] This may mean that in the earliest times quires were made by folding, as suggested by Sellheim,[14] but one example does not allow us to generalize, and we would first need to know whether the quires were of eight leaves.

Hijazi, or, more accurately, the hands that have been classed as Hijazi on the basis of the reference in the *Fihrist*, is not sufficiently well known to allow us more than a glimpse of the development of the Arabic script in the 7th century and at the beginning of the 8th. The historical role of this script, and even the fact of its existence, were obscured by the triumph of the Early Abbasid styles to such an extent that none of the Qur'ans attributed to 'Ali or 'Uthman in subsequent centuries is in this hand, but its importance is shown by the survival into the 8th century of some of its æsthetic, as we have seen in the case of cat. 3. We cannot at present determine the relationship between Hijazi and the more extenuated types of Early Abbasid script which also appear in vertical-format Qur'ans, such as A.I or B.I. If we could, a whole chapter in the history of Arabic calligraphy would emerge from oblivion.



1 recto



2 verso

1
Single folio
Early 8th century AD

Fragmentary (largest dimensions now 32.5×20.5 cm), with 23 and 25 lines to the page
Material Parchment; the recto is the hair side
Text area 29.5×20.5 cm
Script Hijazi I
Accession no. KFQ60
Other fragments from the same Qur'an Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS.arab.328a (Déroche 1983, no.2); Rome, Biblioteca Vaticana, MS.arab.1605/1 (Levi della Vida 1947, pp.1–2 and pl.1)

This folio illustrates the first stage in the history of Qur'anic calligraphy. The format is vertical, and the script, which is thin and slender, also has a distinct vertical emphasis, despite the slant to the right. The hand is rather free, and the number of lines varies between 22 and 26 in the surviving material. The folios in Paris show signs of ruling, but the copyist did not always keep strictly to the horizontal. This and other factors – the rounding of the upper lines of letters such as *dāl, ṣād* and *kāf*, for example – show that, for the copyist, the horizontal element was not the most important.

The forms of *alif, lām,* final *kāf, ṭā'* and *ẓā'* emphasize the orientation on an oblique vertical, and even a line drawn between the two extremities of final *nūn*, would run in this direction. There is no attempt to disguise the movement of the pen, particularly in the case of the medial form of *'ayn*, whose characteristic V has a slight re-entrant. The same is true for the initial and medial forms of *hā'*, whose bar is sometimes almost vertical and sometimes slopes to the left. The circular *mīm* has a short, downward-pointing tail in the final form. Final *nūn* and other letters with similar endings show some variation in their shape, as does final *yā'*, which can end in a backward curve (recto, line 11) or a form that resembles *nūn* (line 10).

The text is written in brown ink, with occasional diacritical strokes. There is no vocalization. Six oval dots ranked in three pairs (2.1.4) punctuate the verses. Every fifth verse is marked by a red *alif* surrounded by dots (see recto, line 3). A red circle (1.A.11) indicates every tenth verse but may be a later addition. It contains a letter in black which gives the number of verses in the *abjad* system.

The text is *Sūrat Hūd* (XI), verses 14–35. As the damaged folio in the Vatican Library ends at verse 13, it almost certainly preceded cat.1.

2
Single folio
Early 8th century AD

17.5×25.5 cm, with 12 lines to the page, ruled
Material Parchment; the verso is the hair side
Text area 13.8×23 cm
Script Hijazi I
Accession no. KFQ34
Another fragment from the same Qur'an Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS.arab.326a (Blachère 1959, pp.95 and 98 and fig.1; Déroche 1983, no.1)

This is an example of the next stage in the development of Qur'anic calligraphy. The page format is horizontal rather than vertical. The ductus still has the extenuated appearance typical of Hijazi, but the letter forms are more precisely defined, and the leaf bears coherent horizontal ruling. The base line is more strongly marked than in cat.1, because the horizontal plays a greater role in this script: the upper line of *dāl, ṣād* and *kāf* is now parallel to the base line, for example.

Some letter forms resemble those of cat.1, but only one type has been retained in the case of letters such as *nūn* or *hā'*, which had more than one form in the earlier example. Other letter forms were modified, the clearest example being final *mīm*: its tail is now horizontal, and its body either sits on the line or straddles it, depending on which letter precedes it. Most vertical strokes still slant to the right, but some verge on the vertical. This is clearly visible in the word *Allāh*, where the second *lām* is almost straight.

The text – verses 13–23 of *Sūrat al-ḥadīd* (LVII) – is written in brown ink, with many diacritical strokes. There is no vocalization. Triangular clusters of three strokes (1.1.4) mark the end of each verse. At verse 19 a crude marker has been added in black ink to indicate the end of a group of ten verses.

3
Two folios
End of the 8th century AD or early 9th

Fragmentary; largest dimensions now 16×24.5 cm (KFQ59) and 13×18.5 cm (KFQ61), with parts of 13 and 11 lines surviving
Material Parchment; the hair side is the verso in both cases
Text area 12.8×20.5 cm (KFQ59), 10.9×17 cm (KFQ61)
Script Hijazi IV
Accession nos KFQ59, KFQ61
Another fragment from the same Qur'an Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS.arab.334c (Déroche 1983, no.9)

The script of these two fragments may be an intermediate style, for it strongly resembles C.Ib, but there is a slight slant to the right, as in Hijazi. The *Fihrist* of Ibn al-Nadim shows that, by the time that this style was in use, the peculiar features of Hijazi were fairly widely known. The veneration paid in later periods to Qur'ans of the Abbasid period that were mistakenly attributed to Companions of the Prophet suggests that in earlier times copies in Hijazi inspired a similar degree of awe. It is thus not impossible that calligraphers sought to retain the most characteristic feature of Hijazi, while using a style of script that was thoroughly contemporary in other respects. This would explain the odd appearance of Hijazi, type IV.

The text of the first fragment (KFQ59) runs from *Sūrat al-nūr* (XXIV), verse 59, to *Sūrat al-furqān* (XXXV), verse 4, with a lacuna between verses 61 and 63 of *Sūrat al-nūr.* The text of the second fragment (KFQ61) consists of verses 77–124 of *Sūrat al-shu'arā'* (LXXVI), with a lacuna between verses 93 and 110. The two fragments are probably part of the same quire and may have been the two halves of the same bifolio, perhaps folios 3 and 8 of the quire.

The text is in black ink, with occasional diacritical strokes. Red dots were used to indicate the vocalization, and clusters of three oblique strokes in ink (1.1.1) were placed at the end of every verse. On the second fragment (recto, line 3; verso, line 1), a red circle surrounded by strokes in ink (1.A.11) indicates the end of a group of ten verses. On the verso of the first fragment a decorative band divides the two surahs: a row of small rosettes separated by a pair of vertical bars ends with a vignette organized around a pomegranate in the left-hand margin. Every fourth rosette is painted in a very dark green, and there is a central group of five red and yellow rosettes.



3 (KFQ 59) recto



3 (KFQ 59) verso

The Early Abbasid Scripts

Since the late 18th century, Western students of Islamic calligraphy have applied the name Kufic to the types of Arabic script that supplanted Hijazi in the production of Qur'ans. The term is misleading, for it associates all these scripts with the town of al-Kufah in southern Iraq, a connection which has never been, and can never be, substantiated. As we have already seen, J.G.C. Adler, one of the first scholars to use the term, borrowed it from Islamic sources without serious consideration of its implications and applied it to the early Qur'anic material in the library of the Danish kings, a collection that was too narrow in its range to be representative. Only a few years after Adler first used the term, Silvestre de Sacy remarked that 'quoique ce nom ait prévalu et que l'on s'en serve communément pour désigner toutes les écritures arabes antérieures à celles qu'inventa Ebn Mokla, il est certain que c'est donner à l'épithète de Cufique une signification trop illimitée',[1] and a rapid survey of the 'Kufic' fragments in the Khalili Collection shows that the variety of scripts used in this period is too great to be defined by so restrictive a name. Indeed, scholars such as von Karabacek and Abbott introduced new names such as *'irāqī* and *mashq* in their studies of early Islamic scripts, presumably because they felt that 'Kufic' was inadequate, but they created some confusion by not explaining the relationship between the scripts they identified and those usually called Kufic.[2]

For these reasons, it is clear that, if we are to use a generic name to cover the whole range of Qur'anic scripts that replaced Hijazi, we should avoid the term Kufic or any similar appellation that refers to a precise geographical location. It would seem less perilous to choose a very general name that reflects what little we know of the chronology of the scripts, and we have therefore proposed that they be called the Abbasid scripts, after the dynasty of that name which assumed the caliphate in the middle of the 8th century AD and ruled during the period when 'Kufic' flourished. Even the term Abbasid is not entirely accurate, for some of the styles included under this heading were already in use in the period immediately before the establishment of the Abbasid caliphate in AD 750. One of the Abbasids' Umayyad predecessors, the caliph 'Abd al-Malik (*reg* 685–705), probably played a part in their development as a result of his reform of chancery usages, and early inscriptions already show some of the letter types which appear in the manuscripts.[3] However, although some examples of what we call the Abbasid scripts are earlier than the manuscripts examined here, the overwhelming majority of the extant examples, including all the dated Qur'ans, was produced in the Abbasid period.

This present essay is devoted to an analysis of scripts. There is, however, an inherent link between scripts and the materials on which they are written, and for a discussion of the codicology of manuscripts written in the Early Abbasid scripts the reader should refer to the discussion on pages 17–25 above. The Abbasid scripts fall into two main groups, the Early Abbasid styles and the New Style, which were the equivalent of Kufic proper and Eastern Kufic in the usual nomenclature. The cursive scripts might be classified conveniently as a third group, but they do not seem to have been in general use for copying the Qur'an until the 11th century, and they do not fall within the scope of this catalogue. The Early Abbasid group is characterized by a proliferation of styles, and this is reflected in contemporary sources such as the *Fihrist* of Ibn al-Nadim, which contain lists of names for the different types of script. Unfortunately, it has proved impossible to identify these names with any of the scripts that occur in the surviving material,[4] and we have therefore been forced to rely on other means to identify them. In labelling the different styles, we have tried to develop a system that is flexible enough to incorporate new discoveries, and for this reason we have chosen to use codes based on letters and numbers. The six main styles are identified by the letters A to F. Most of the main

styles have then been subdivided into types identified by Roman numerals, as in D.I, D.II and D.III. In a few cases, we have had to distinguish between variants of these types, and the sub-types, such as C.Ia or D.vb, are indicated by the addition of a lower-case letter to the code.

Not all the scripts are represented equally. Some, such as B.II, appear on large numbers of fragments, while others, such as D.II, occur on very few.[5] It must also be borne in mind that whole classes of material may have been destroyed, with the result that our picture of the development of Qur'anic calligraphy will never be complete. Any number of other causes for the uneven distribution of the Early Abbasid scripts could be cited, but care must be taken in evaluating these, as almost all the manuscripts or fragments on which our knowledge is based were found in the western half of the Islamic world, most notably in the storerooms of mosques in Cairo, Damascus, Kairouan and San'a'. As a result, next to nothing is known about the situation further east, and it may be that some of the rarer types of script belong to groups that were once relatively common in the eastern Islamic lands. The fragments found in Cairo, Damascus, Kairouan and San'a' cover more or less the same range of scripts, but we must wait for the definitive publication of these collections before the proportions in which the various scripts survive can be determined. Even then, we will never be sure that the element of chance in the rates of survival has not given us a distorted picture of the original situation.

Group A

In assembling the Khalili Collection, the aim has been to cover the whole spectrum of early Islamic calligraphy as fully as possible, and almost all the Early Abbasid styles are represented in it. Style A, of which very few examples survive, is represented by cat. 5 below. Its transitional character is evident in its combination of letter forms. Some, such as initial and medial *hā'*, bear a close resemblance to the same forms in Hijazi, while others are more typical of the later Abbasid styles: the combined form of *lām* and *alif* resembles the solution adopted in D.I, for example, and the final *nūn* of group A is very similar to that of group C, although the return at the base is longer. The vertical strokes are mostly perpendicular to the base line, but those of *ṭā'* and *ẓā'* and final *kāf* and *lām* retain the Hijazi tilt to the right. Several fragments were found in Cairo and Damascus,[6] but no external evidence has been discovered for dating them.

Group B

All the scripts included under this heading have the same basic forms of *alif*, *mīm*, *hā'*, and, to a lesser extent, *nūn*. The sub-types B.Ia and B.Ib are very similar. B.Ia has *alifs* that slope slightly to the right, which may mean that it should be considered a form of Hijazi; in B.Ib, however, the vertical upstrokes are always perpendicular to the base line. The small group of B.Ia fragments found in Cairo, Damascus and San'a' show the same hesitation in writing final *nūn*: in some cases it resembles the form that occurs in Hijazi manuscripts, but in other cases it is very close to the final *nūn* of B.Ib.[7] Other letters are more consistent in the forms they take, which sometimes approximate to the shapes seen in Hijazi, and sometimes to those of B.Ib. This second sub-type is generally a medium-sized or large script. The manuscripts and fragments written in it include items found in Cairo and Damascus.[8] From a codicological point of view, this material is very varied, for, besides examples in the vertical format, such as cat. 4, and others in the horizontal format, such as cat. 6, it includes a third type that has square leaves, a format that must go back to the ancient use of papyrus.[9] No examples of B.Ia or B.Ib are dated, but the inscription on the al-Ta'if dam which contains the date AH 58 (AD 677–8) is in a similar style,[10]

as are the graffiti from the beginning of the 2nd century AH (8th century AD) that Miriam Rosen-Ayalon discovered in the Negev.[11] More generally, analogous forms of *mīm* and *hā'* occur quite often in the oldest Islamic inscriptions.[12] We may take this as evidence that the B.I sub-group was in use in the 8th century, with B.Ia perhaps slightly earlier than B.Ib.

The second type of script included in this group, B.II, is the style that von Karabacek called *'irāqī*.[13] It is generally a small hand, and there is no trace of the oblique slant or the extenuated appearance of Hijazi: the line is thick, and the short upward strokes are always strictly vertical. Examples written in this style occur among the discarded Qur'an material discovered in Cairo, Damascus, Kairouan and San'a',[14] and the Damascus material has yielded two dates with which it can be associated, AH 22[9] (AD 843–4) and Safar AH 249 (April AD 863),[15] while a fragment reproduced by Moritz bears the date AH 270 (AD 883–4).[16] It appears from this that B.II was in use fairly early in the 9th century.

Group C

Fourteen items in the collection of the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris have similar forms of *mīm*, *nūn* and *hā'*, and they were grouped together on this basis.[17] Many more examples have now been identified, and it is possible that the palæographical definition of some styles should be revised. C.Ia is a thick, vertical script, while C.Ib is thinner, and its horizontal strokes have triangular endings. Fragments written in both of these sub-types have been found in Cairo, Damascus and San'a'.[18] A form of *hā'* very close to that of C.Ia appears in an inscription in the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem which dates from AH 72 (AD 691);[19] letter forms used in both C.Ia and C.Ib are similar to those of Hijazi IV, which seems to have been employed in the 8th century AD; and there is other evidence to suggest that C.I was in use in the second decade of the 3rd century AH (between AD 825 and 835). We may therefore conclude that C.I was in use in the 8th century AD, or at least in the second half of that century.

C.II is a thick, vertical script and may be a more elaborate variant of C.I. No external evidence for the dating of this style has yet been found, but a comparison with the two sub-types of C.I suggests that it is later – perhaps only a little later. At present, the sample available is very small, but it includes material from Cairo and perhaps Damascus.[20]

C.III is a medium-sized hand, which is generally very close to C.II. Manuscripts and fragments from Cairo and Damascus give a fairly complete picture of its range.[21] It may have been the last style in this group to develop, for a document that accompanies a Qur'an written in C.III dates from the last years of the 9th century AD.

Group D

This is the most numerous and most varied group of Early Abbasid scripts. It contains five different styles, and one of these (D.V) is divided into three sub-types. However, many of the individual hands that can be related to one or other of these types and sub-types are imperfect versions of them. The basic letter forms we have chosen for the purposes of comparison – those of *alif*, *mīm*, *nūn* and *hā'* – are rendered in different ways, but it is impossible to place their development in a chronological sequence, and the codes we have given the scripts in this group do not reflect a classification of this type. The line is thick, and the vertical upstrokes are always perpendicular to the base line.

D.I is a large hand.[22] Examples of it have been found in all four of the great caches of discarded Qur'an material.[23] Several copies of the Qur'an written in D.I bear dates in the 9th and 10th cen-

turies AD: a copy in Istanbul with an inscription that commemorates a birth in Shawwal AH 232 (May–June AD 847);[24] the Qur'an of Amajur, dated AH 262 (AD 875–6);[25] an example in Cairo with a *waqfiyyah* dated AH 267 (AD 880–81);[26] the Qur'an of 'Abd al-Mun'im, which has a *waqfiyyah* dated Dhu'l-Qa'dah AH 298 (July AD 911);[27] and another copy in Istanbul with a *waqfiyyah* of Ramadan AH 337 (March AD 949).[28] From this, we may conclude that this style had been elaborated by the beginning of the 9th century AD and that it remained popular at least until the end of the century and most probably into the next. Some less skilful versions may even date from quite late in the 10th century, if we can trust a *waqfiyyah* dated Ramadan AH 366 (AD 976–7) in a Qur'an fragment in Paris.[29]

D.II can be distinguished from D.I by the slight curve to the right in the upper part of the shafts of *alif, ṭā', lām* etc.; by the return at the base of independent *alif,* which is perhaps less rounded; and the lower return of final or independent *nūn,* which is less clearly oriented upwards. The other letter forms generally resemble those of D.I, but the overall impression is of a certain awkwardness, despite the coherence and regularity of the style. Is it perhaps the product of a single scribe, or of a provincial school? A limited number of D.II manuscripts were found in Cairo and Kairouan,[30] and they can be easily distinguished by their large hands and illumination. There is no external evidence that would allow us to date D.II, but, on the basis of the stylistic relationship to D.I, we may ascribe it to the 9th century AD or perhaps a little later; the matter is open to debate.

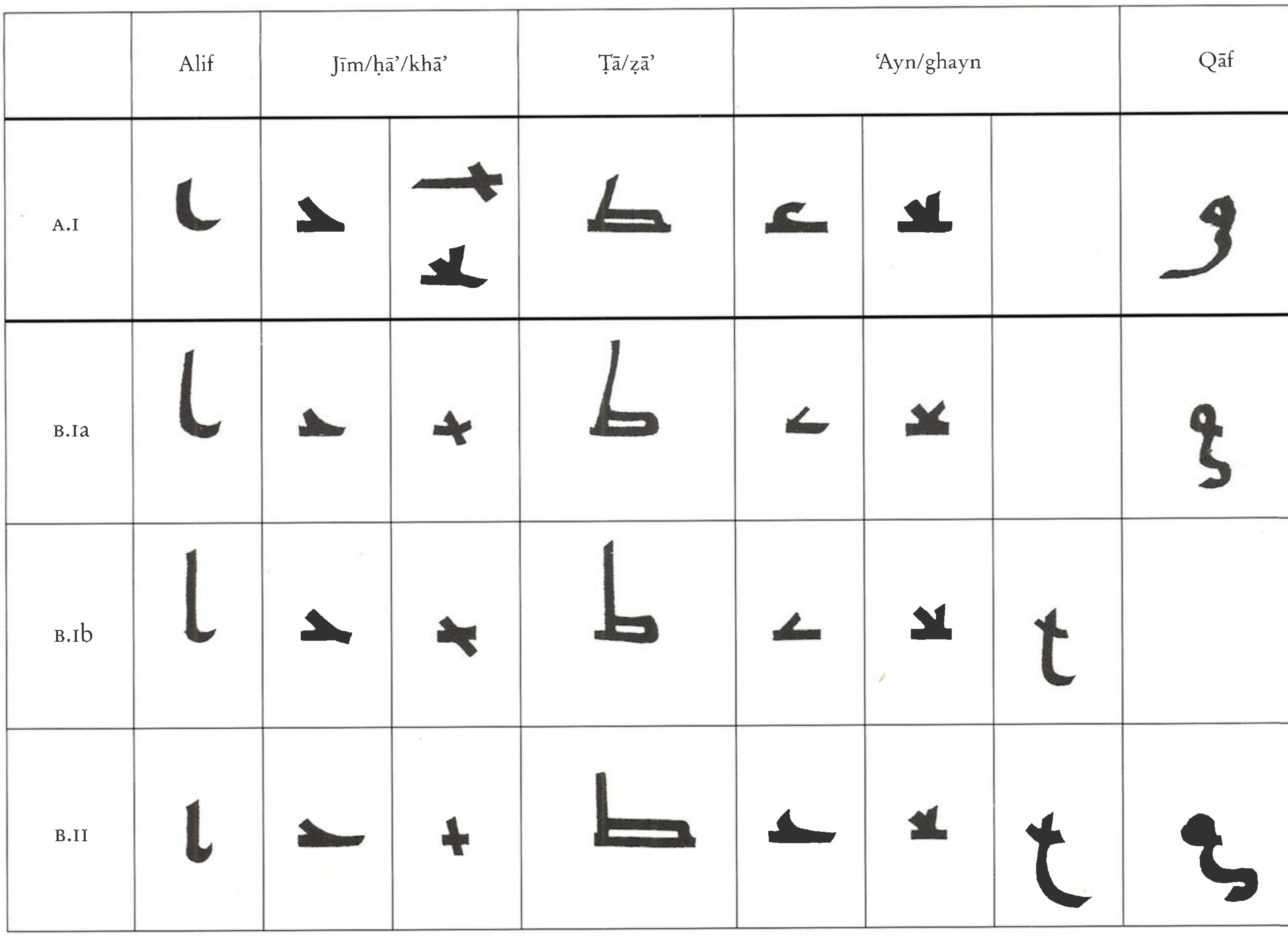
D.III is a large hand. Like D.I, it is well represented in the material from all four major finds,[31] but it is difficult to date. A Qur'an in D.III from Kairouan is dated AH 295 (AD 907–8),[32] and similar forms of *alif* and *nūn* appear in a *waqf* deed dated Dhu'l-Qa'dah AH 298 (July AD 911),[33] but this evidence is not sufficient to allow us to conclude that D.III is later than D.I. We may assign it provisionally to the second half of the 9th century AD.

D.IV is a small or medium-sized script remarkable for the frequent use of *mashq.* It appears in all four of the great finds of early Qur'an material.[34] Ascribing this style to a particular period is not easy, although two manuscripts written in it contain dated inscriptions. The date in one of these inscriptions, a *waqf* deed of AH 270 (AD 883–4), seems acceptable, whereas the other, a *waqfiyyah* dated AH 329 (AD 940–41), is surprisingly late, and the manuscript in which it occurs is in the vertical format rather than the horizontal format one would have expected.[35] Such a late date for D.IV would, however, fit with Jonathan Bloom's recent dating of the Blue Qur'an, which is related stylistically to D.IV, to the middle of the 10th century.[36]

The D.V sub-group seems to have developed as the result of external influences on the basic repertory of group D. This may indicate the growing popularity of scripts that were closer to contemporary practice. The letter forms of D.va are close to those of D.I, but there is a slight vertical extenuation of the letters, a feature which is more apparent in D.vb. In D.va we can also see examples of the shaft of *ṭā'* developing a slant and a break in its upper register; of final *mīm* with a thread-like tail; and of letters superimposed. A D.va manuscript in Istanbul contains a *waqf* deed dated Jumada II AH 299 (January–February AD 912),[37] and at present this is our only evidence for dating this group. There are examples of this sub-type in all four major finds of early Qur'an material, and some are in the vertical format.[38]

D.vb, which differs from D.va in its more pronounced vertical extenuation, is a large or medium-sized script which figures in manuscripts or fragments from Cairo and Damascus.[39] It is not unusual to find it in vertical-format manuscripts, which perhaps shows that it is relatively late. This contention appears to be supported by the colophon of a manuscript in Istanbul,

Table II
Letter forms of groups A and B



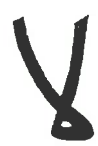
Group A

Alif. The shaft is vertical, and the return at the base is short and relatively flat.
Jīm. Within a word, but not after an initial indentation such as *yā'*, it consists of an oblique stroke across the line. As a final letter, its shape varies: in cat. 5, its tail is long and flat, with no final loop (KFQ62, verso, line 2).
Ṭā'. The vertical shaft slopes to the right, as in Hijazi.
'Ayn. When initial, the upper hook is thickened. In the medial form, the right-hand antenna is vertical. The long, flat tail of the final and independent forms rests on the base line, like that of *jīm* (cat. 5, KFQ42, verso, line 6).
Qāf. The final and independent forms end in an open curve, which narrows with the turn of the pen. In some manuscripts, it extends to the left of the head of the letter, parallel with the base line.
Mīm is approximately circular. The short, flat tail of the final form rests on the base line.
Nūn. The crescent shape of the final form ends in a flattened return which is often quite short (cat. 5, KFQ62, verso, line 2). In other instances (cat. 5, KFQ42, verso, line 8), it is longer and rises towards the base line.
Hā'. The initial and medial forms are close to that of Hijazi I: the bar slopes to the left; the 'eyes' are well defined; and the letter rests on the base line.

Group B

B.Ia
The most striking feature of this sub-type is the way that the vertical upstrokes slope to the right, as in Hijazi. In almost all other respects, it is very close to B.Ib.

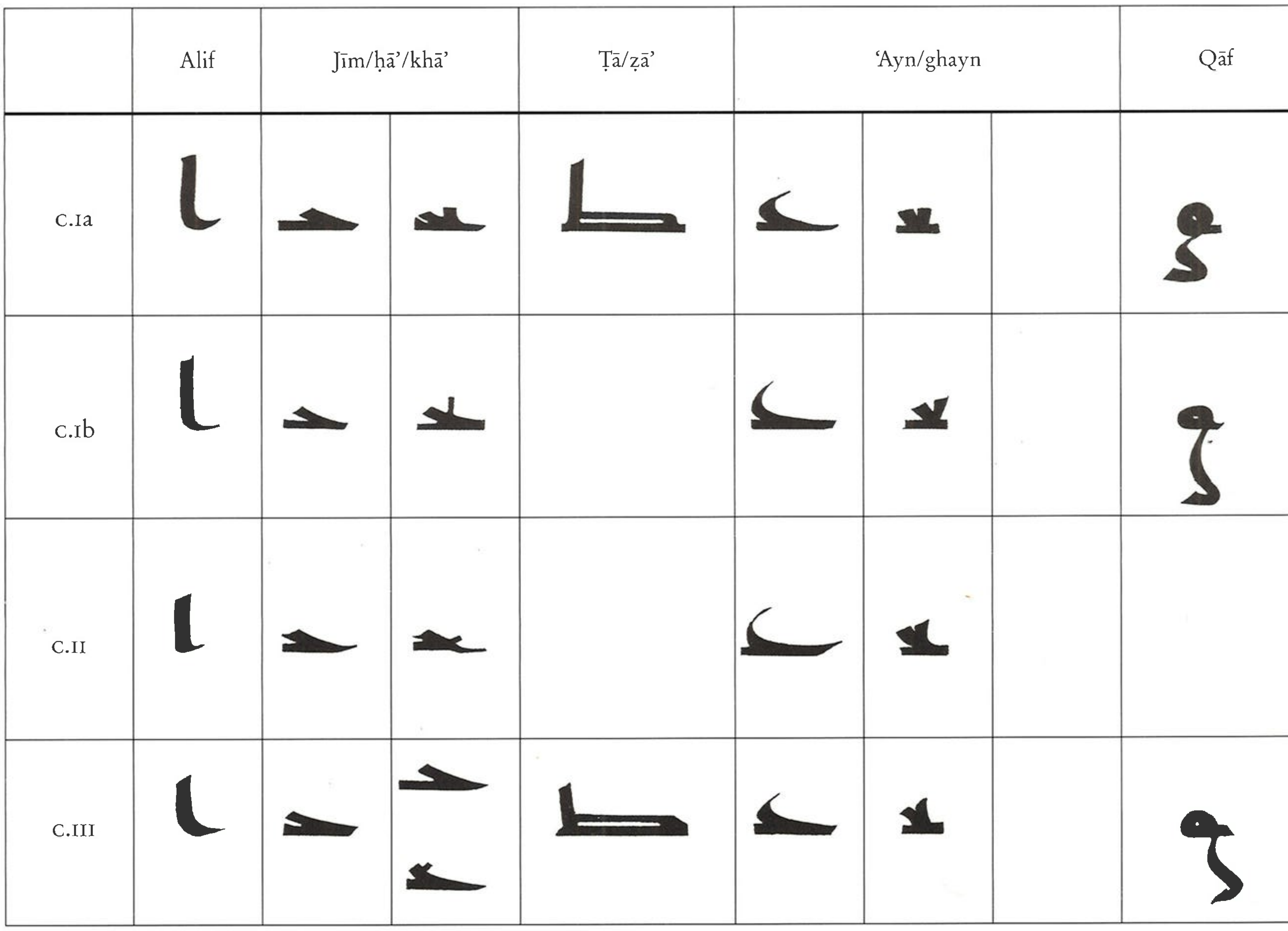
B.Ib
Alif. The shaft is always strictly vertical, and the independent form has a horizontal return with a blunt end which is almost perpendicular to the shaft.
Jīm. The medial form is shaped like an oblique bar placed across the base line. The horizontal tail of the final form ends in a short downward hook which is open to the right (cat. 6, recto, line 7).
'Ayn. In the medial form, the right-hand antenna is almost vertical, and the left-hand antenna leans to the left. In the initial form, the upper curve is generally reduced to a short, sloping hook. In the final form, the right antenna is prolonged almost vertically before

Mīm		Nūn		Hā’	Lām-alif	
						Cat. 5; and Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS.arab.330e, folio 39a, for the *ṭā’/ẓā’* only
						Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS.arab.331, folio 43a
						Cat. 6
						Cat. 9

ending in a short return to the left, nearly parallel with the base line.
Qāf. Finally, its tail takes the form of a U whose branches are parallel with the base line.
Mīm is a circle, placed more or less neatly astride the line. The tail of the final form is usually horizontal but often curves almost imperceptibly upwards.
Nūn. Finally, the head is slightly curved but not thickened; the body of the letter is vertical; and the lower return curves very slightly upwards – a feature also seen in the lower return of final and independent *lām*.
Hā’. Supported on a bar which has the Hijazi habit of leaning to the left, the initial and medial forms of this letter sit astride the base line, which is indicated by the stroke that separates the two ‘eyes’. A kind of semicircle leans against the bar to form the body of the letter. In some versions (see cat. 4), the initial and medial forms resemble final *hā’*; the only feature shared with the more normal form is a slight extension below the base line.
Lām-alif. The *alif* curves away from the intersection with the *lām*, which is straight and slightly slanted.

B.II
Alif. Always strictly vertical, it has a short, hook-like lower return in the independent form.
Jīm. Medially, it resembles B.Ib, with the bar tending to the vertical. In the final position, the tail thickens slightly before turning back on itself, parallel to the base line.
‘Ayn. Within a word, the two antennae are hardly differentiated, but that on the right is completely vertical. Finally, the tail extends in a generous curve (cat. 11), although, at cat. 10, folio 40b, it has kept the straight element (see D.I). The hook of the initial form is relatively pronounced compared with letters such as *bā’* and *fā’*, and it tapers off at the end.
Qāf. In the final position, it recalls the shape seen in B.Ib, except that the U-ending is generally pushed further to the right in relation to the head of the letter.
Mīm. As in B.Ib, this letter is circular. It is distinctly so in the final form, whose short, horizontal tail rests on the base line.
Nūn. In the independent position, this letter is reduced to a vertical stroke, with a short perpendicular return at the bottom. At the end of a word, a triangular element is added to the upper part of the letter, which makes it look as though the top end has been bent over.
Hā’. Initially and medially, the form is that of B.Ib, but thicker.
Lām-alif. The two letters form a saltire, with the arm formed by the *lām* being the finer. In the independent position, it has an asymmetrical base.

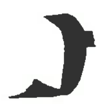
Table III
Letter forms of group C



Group C
C.Ia
Alif. In isolation, this letter has a short return which turns up slightly.
Jīm. Within a word, this letter rests on the base line and does not descend below it. When it occurs at the end of a word, the tail is horizontal.
'Ayn. In the medial form, the two antennae are virtually identical. In the initial form, the hook looks as though it has been broken: it begins as an oblique stroke to the left, from which a spur strikes out to form an acute (or at the most a right) angle.
Mīm. At the end of a word or in isolation, it is a flattened circle whose base lies on the line or is indistinguishable from it. The horizontal tail ends in an oblique angle and sometimes looks like a mere extension of the side.
Nūn. The final form is a crescent which narrows as the pen turns to form the lower return.
Hā'. This can be described as a quarter-circle propped against a vertical bar and laid on the base line.

C.Ib
Alif. The independent form has a medium-sized return which is somewhat flattened.
Jīm. As in C.Ia.
'Ayn. The initial form is similar to C.Ia. In the medial form, the right-hand antenna tends to droop. In the final form, the tail follows the line of this antenna to form a broad curve.
Mīm has taken on the shape of a rounded triangle that has been laid on, or, rather, squashed down on to, the base line. The tail of the final form is horizontal.
Nūn. The final and independent forms are similar in shape to those of C.Ia: the head leans to the left, without thickening, and the lower return is horizontal and is preceded by a narrowing of the ductus. The body of the letter slopes to the right.
Hā'. The initial and medial forms are similar to those of C.Ia, except that the support is entirely vertical.
Lām-alif. The two arms curve towards each other more noticeably than in C.Ia.

C.II
Alif. The lower return of the independent form is short and fine.
Jīm. As in C.Ia and C.Ib, the medial form sits on the base line; only a short, crimped element descends beneath it. In the independent form, it has a flat tail.
'Ayn has forms analogous to those seen in C.Ia and C.Ib. In the final form, the letter ends in a long, tapering curve which does not follow the line of the right-hand antenna (see B.II). The hook in the initial form is more open and reaches upwards.
Lām. In the final and independent forms, the lower return has a triangular ending. The

Mīm		Nūn		Hā’	Lām-alif	
						Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS.arab.324c
						Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS.arab.334b, folio 21b
						Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS.arab.334e, folio 63a
						Cat. 16

outer side is curved.
Mīm is like a circle crushed on to the line; a vaguely triangular effect is made stronger in the final form by the triangular tail.
Nūn. The final form has the basic crescent shape common to group C, but it is smoother here: the pen seems to have drawn the head and body with a single rounded stroke. The lower ending begins with a characteristic constriction, but broadens out into a triangle.
Hā’. The initial and medial forms resemble those of C.Ia and C.Ib, although there is sometimes a slight flattening of the letter.
Lām-alif. The curving of the branches is less noticeable in C.II than it is in C.I.

C.III
Alif. The lower return of the independent form is normally lengthened, as though flattened on to the line.
Jīm. As in C.I and C.II.
‘Ayn. The medial form is similar to those of the other C scripts. As an initial letter, it resembles the form seen in C.II, with the hook wide open.
Mīm. The triangular but rounded shape is particularly noticeable in the final form, where it is emphasized by the reduction of the tail to a horizontal point.
Nūn. The other distinctive trait of the C group is the treatment of the lower end of final or independent *nūn*. In C.III, it tapers off to finish the curve of the letter’s body, directly recalling the form seen in C.II. In some manuscripts (cat. 17, for example), a triangular lower ending may be seen.
Hā’. As in C.I and C.II.
Lām-alif. The two arms curve towards each other, the *lām* being the higher.

which is dated Jumada I AH 307 (September–October AD 919);[40] but the colophon is in a different script to the main text and was added at some point when the manuscript was repaired. Unfortunately, it is not clear whether the text of the colophon dates from the time of the repair or was copied from the old colophon.

D.VC is close to D.Vb. It is a relatively thin script in which the U-ligature found occasionally in D.Va was used very frequently. This style, which Amari called 'écriture de Damas',[41] is attested in the material from Cairo, Damascus and Kairouan.[42] The dating of D.VC should no doubt be linked to that of D.Vb, but we have very little direct evidence: the *nūn* of this sub-type figures in a *waqf* deed from Damascus dated Dhu'l-Qa'dah AH 298 (July AD 911),[43] but this may be because D had been adapted to current practice, in which *mīm* and *nūn* had similar forms.

Group E

This group contains a series of scripts with related characteristics, but, like D, it has a central core of good manuscripts, which in the case of E is rather small, and a majority of fairly mediocre copies. Among the latter we find some systematic recourse to *mashq*. Sometimes the whole text is treated in this way; at other times, horizontal elongations over one or more lines give the impression of an exact and careful page layout.[44] E.I figures extensively in the material from Cairo and Damascus.[45] The *waqf* deed of AH 298 (AD 911) has already been remarked upon above,[46] and E.I is also the script of a Qur'an fragment in which a birth was recorded in AH 309 (AD 921–2).[47] A date at the end of the 9th century AD or the beginning of the 10th would therefore seem assured, were it not for the use of a variant of E in a manuscript dated AH 512 (AD 1118–19).[48] Some E usages deserve to be pointed out. One is the use of a semicircular *nūn* similar to that of D.VC in manuscripts from San'a' and Damascus;[49] another is the occurrence of a group of manuscripts in which characteristics of group E (*alif*, the tail of *mīm*) were combined with others from B.II (the body of *mīm*, *nūn* and *hā'*), thus showing that it was perfectly possible to create hybrid scripts.[50]

Group F

Mashq is a constant feature of this style, which seems to be present only in the material from Damascus. None of the manuscripts or fragments in this group is dated, although there are similarities with a milestone in Tbilisi dated about AH 100 (AD 718–19),[51] and the treatment of horizontal endings recalls those in an inscription of the caliph al-Mahdi which is dated AH 160 (AD 776–7).[52] We can therefore venture a dating to the 2nd century AH for this style.

Group D

D.I

Alif. The lower return of the independent form is long and tapering, with a definite curve.
Jīm. As in group C, the medial form rests on the line. The letters before the *jīm* were often placed slightly higher. In the final and independent forms, it has a thickened tail which turns back on itself in a tight curve and ends under the head of the letter.
'Ayn. When initial, it appears as an open hook with a curved body. When medial, the right-hand antenna is vertical. When final, the return does not follow the line of the right-hand antenna but slants to the left and ends in a sickle shape. When independent, the tail has the same design as that of the *jīm*.
Qāf. The final and independent forms keep the U-shaped tail, which is tucked in under the letter, parallel to the base line.
Mīm. Although the letter is still flattened on to the line, the upper part is more separate than in the C scripts. The horizontal tail of the final form follows the lower part of the letter along the base line.
Nūn. In the final form, the head is slightly thickened and joins the vertical body in a noticeable curve. The lower return droops towards the line.
Hā'. The medial form is set on the base line and consists of a semicircle resting on a vertical bar.
Lām-alif. The *lām* is the finer of the two arms and curves delicately towards the *alif,* which has a pronounced slant.

D.II

Alif. Very like that of D.I. The return is perhaps less rounded, but the main difference is in the treatment of the upper part of the shaft, which bends slightly and ends in a curved 'chamfer'. The same feature can be observed in the vertical upstrokes of other letters such as *ṭā'* and *lām*.
Nūn. In the final and independent forms, it resembles those of D.I, except that the lower return is less clearly oriented upwards.
The other letters generally resemble those of D.I.

D.III

Alif. The independent form has a longer, tapering lower return, which has been flattened on to the line. The passage from the shaft to the return is often accompanied by a relative thickening of the ductus.
Jīm. In the final and independent forms, the thickening of the tail is all the more noticeable in that it ends with a slender point; in some cases, the base line between the head of the letter and the thickening of the tail was subject to *mashq* (i.e. it was extended horizontally).
'Ayn. In the initial form, there is a lengthening of the base on to which the upper hook has been grafted. The hook itself is very open. Within a word, the two antennae are clearly distinguished, the right-hand antenna being vertical. In the final form, the tail either disengages itself from the right-hand antenna at a slight angle or rises vertically and then turns fairly sharply to the right.
Mīm is all but identical to that of D.I: at the very most, the tail is sometimes a little more distinct, and there is a tendency to accentuate the angle of the 'chamfer' in order to sharpen its lower point, as in the case of other horizontal endings.
Nūn. In the final and independent forms, it is simpler than in D.I: the thickening of the head, which differentiated it from the body, has gone, so that the line is uniformly thick. The lower return is horizontal.
Hā'. Very close to that of D.I.
Lām-alif. This differs from the form seen in D.I by the stiff and vertical appearance of the *lām*.

D.IV

Alif. When it stands by itself, the lower return is relatively flat, although less so than in D.III, and it has a blunt end.
'Ayn. At the beginning of a word, the upper hook is at a less open angle to the base line and is most often short and straight. There is a variety of final forms: one resembles that of D.I; another is closer to that of B.II; and the Blue Qur'an (cat.42) offers a third, in which the head is V-shaped, and the tail turns sharply to the right to follow the base line.
Qāf. The independent and final forms resemble those of D.I.
Mīm. Although close to D.I in form, it has a tendency to cross below the base line. In this case, the lower part of the letter bulges slightly, as in B.II.
Nūn. The head of the final and independent forms is short and relatively thick; this is particularly noticeable in the independent form. The lower return is very short and does not disengage itself strongly from the vertical body.
Hā'. As with *mīm*, the form of this letter resembles that seen in B.II. It is composed of a rough semicircle leaning on a vertical bar and tends to drop below the line.
Lām-alif. One form is reminiscent of D.I, while another has two parallel vertical arms.

D.Va

Alif. The independent form resembles that of style D.I.
'Ayn. As in D.I, except perhaps when a break appears in the curve of final *'ayn* as it turns back on itself.
Mīm. Generally as in D.I.
Nūn. As in D.III, but the head of the final and independent forms is not strongly marked, and the body is longer.
Hā'. Mostly as in D.I.

D.Vb

Alif. When it stands by itself, it has a long and gently rising return. The shaft is tall and thin, like those of *ṭā'* and *lām*.
Ṭā'. The shaft is often oblique and curves over at the top. This form was also used for final *kāf.*
'Ayn. Reminiscent of D.I.
Mīm. Mostly as in D.I.
Nūn. In the final and independent forms, the head is not differentiated from the body, which is vertical and much longer than before. The horizontal lower return is perpendicular to the body. The whole letter is of an even thickness (see D.III).
Hā'. As in D.I.
Lām-alif. There is some variety, even within a single manuscript. D.I and D.III types occur, as well as a form in which the two branches are parallel.

D.Vc

Alif. As in D.Vb, but the shaft is more slender.
'Ayn. As in D.Vb.
Mīm. The final and independent forms most often end in a thread-like tail which leaves the letter and follows the line of its left side, curving round to the left.
Nūn. There are two forms in final or isolated position: one is the same as D.Vb; the other is almost a semicircle. This outline is also used for final *yā'* and especially for *sīn*.
Hā'. As in D.Vb.

Table IV
Letter forms of group D



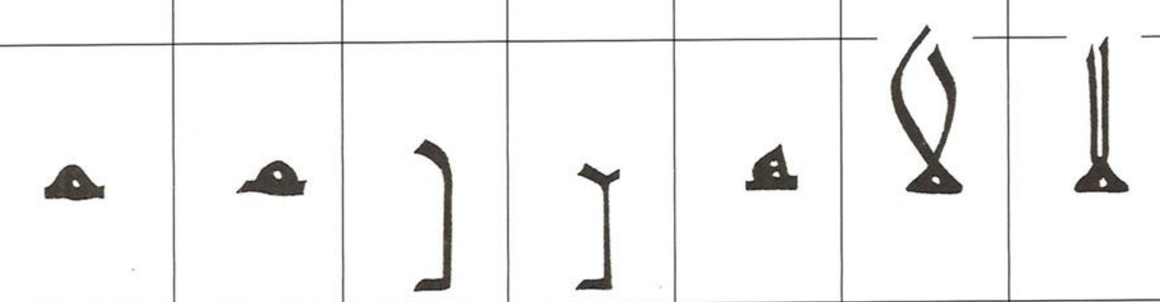
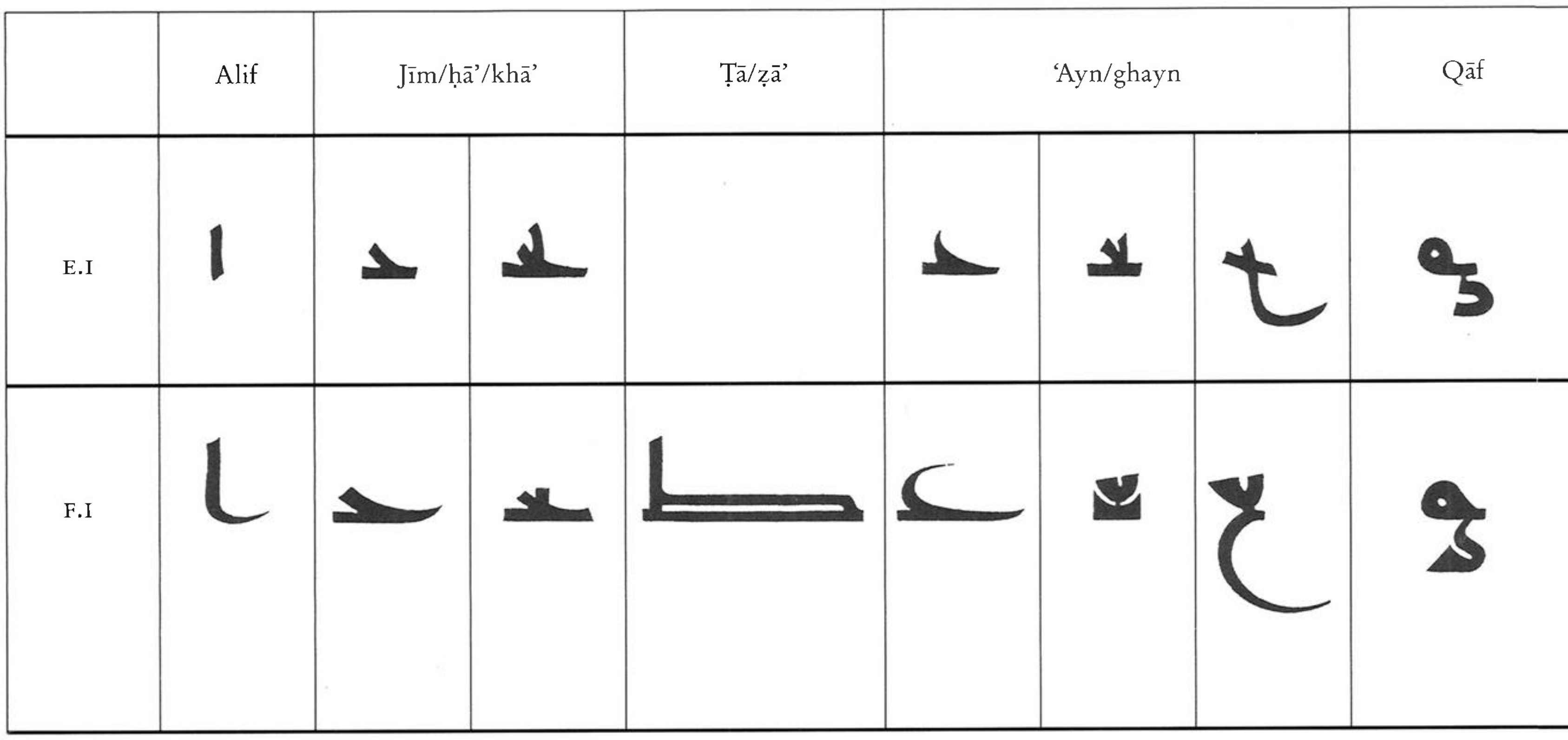
Mīm	Nūn	Hā'	Lām-alif	
				Cat.21; and Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS.arab.350a, for *qāf* and medial *jīm/ḥā'/khā'* only
				Cat.24
				Cat.25
				Cat.39
				Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS.arab.342a, folio 13b
				Cat.57
				Cat.58

Table V
Letter forms of groups E and F



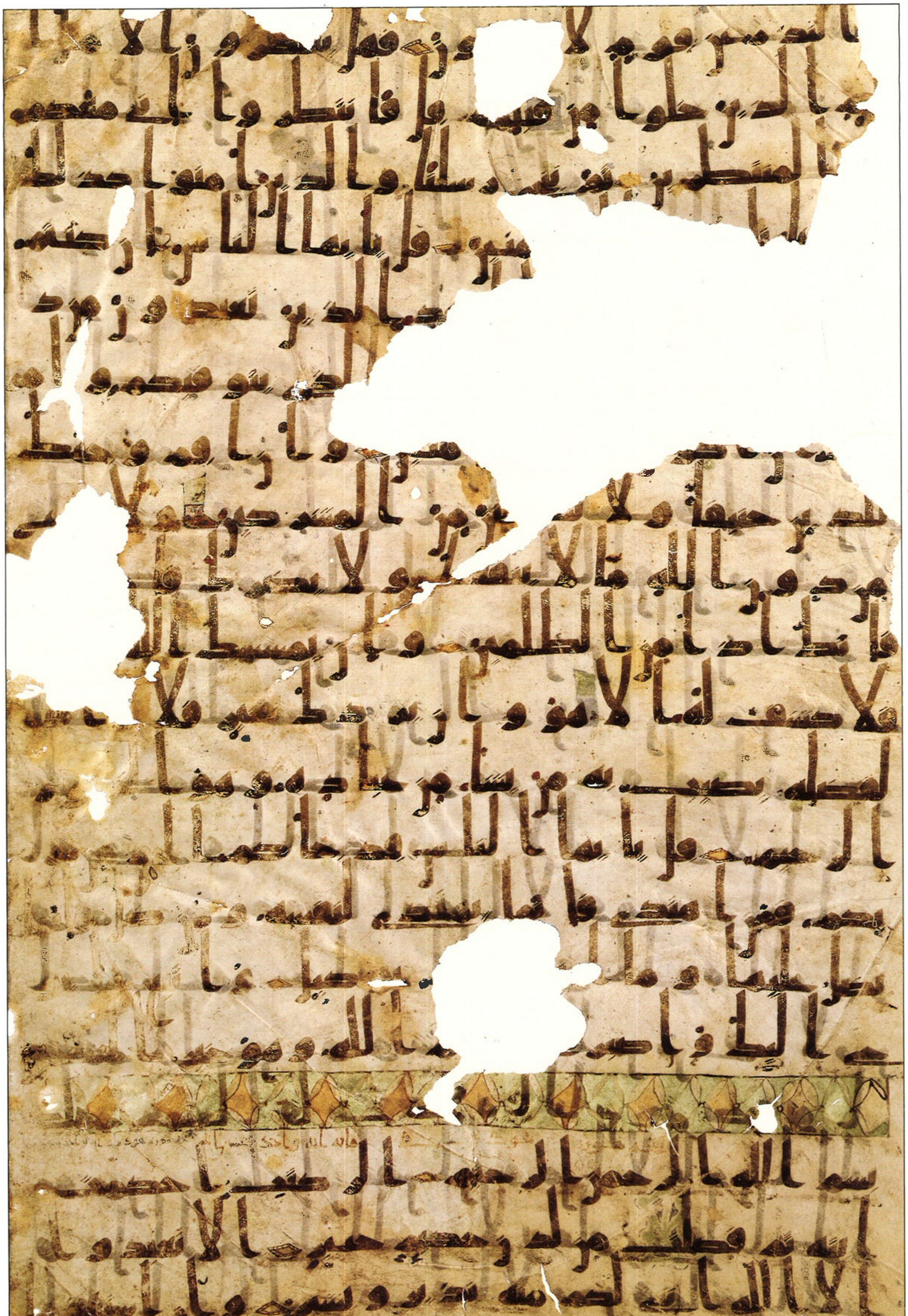
Group E

Alif. The independent form is shaped like a vertical rod, as the lower return has disappeared.
'Ayn. As in D.
Mīm is almost circular, like the *mīm* of D.IV. Its lower line tends to drop below the base line. In the final form, its thread-like tail is usually vertical but sometimes has a slight curve.
Nūn. The final form is often a version of that found in D, with a short, swollen head.
Hā'. Close to D.

Group F

Alif. The vertical shaft is relatively extenuated. In the independent form, the lower return sometimes recalls that of D.I, but it is sometimes flatter.
Jīm. The tilted upper bar is turned up slightly. In the medial form, it sometimes drops below the base line, on which it is normally placed, so that the turning up is accentuated. In the final form, the tail turns back on itself in a fashion similar to that of the final *jīm* of B.II, but when it stands by itself the tail lies flat on the base line.
'Ayn. When initial, the hook rises more rapidly from the base line than in most other styles; it describes a smooth curve and ends in a sharp point. Within a word, the two antennae form a V which sometimes stands on a little stalk. The forms of the letters on either side were adapted to form a frame round the letter, an arrangement that also occurs with medial *fā'* and *qāf*. The V-shaped head also appears in final *'ayn,* whose tail takes on a very unusual form: it seems to spring straight from the base line, describing a wide curve.
Qāf. In the final and independent forms, it ends with a U-shaped tail arranged at an oblique angle to the base line, due to the triangular splay at the lower end. This treatment of horizontal endings, and of similar endings such as that of final *nūn*, is typical of F.I.
Mīm. The predominant form is a circular, or roughly circular, shape which encroaches on the base line. When final, the horizontal tail ends in a triangular stub.
Nūn. When it stands by itself or at the end of a word, it oscillates between the shape seen in C scripts, which features a break in the flow of the curve before the lower return, and a semi-circle; in both cases, the two ends are splayed.
Hā'. In the initial and medial forms, it resembles the *hā'* of group C, a quarter-circle leaning against a vertical bar. The bar is sometimes incorporated within the letter to such an extent that it shows only as a little spur sticking out from the upper end.
Lām-alif. Its triangular base and almost symmetrical shape recall the *lām-alif* of group C, particularly that of C.II; its arms are often almost parallel.

Mīm		Nūn		Hā’	Lām-alif	
						Cat. 62
						Cat. 66



4 verso

4
Single folio
Second half of the 8th century AD or early 9th

47×33cm, with
20 lines to the page
Material Parchment; the recto is the hair side
Text area 44.2×30.5cm
Script Close to style B.Ib
Accession no. KFQ50
Another fragment from the same Qur'an Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS.arab.335 (Déroche 1983, no.22)

The script of this folio is almost identical to style B.Ib, the main difference being the way in which the initial and medial forms of *hā'* lie slightly across the base line. The shape of the manuscript is worthy of attention, for its vertical format recalls the fragments written in Hijazi. This can be seen as an indication that the script belongs to a transitional phase between Hijazi and the other Early Abbasid hands. In the case of cat. 6, we will stress the part that Hijazi played in the formation of the B.Ib script itself; here it is the format of the page which may illustrate the process of evolution.

The text – *Sūrat Yūnus* (X), verse 90, to *Sūrat Hūd* (XI), verse 3 – is written in dark brown ink, with diacritical strokes. Red dots indicate the vocalization. Yellow lozenges outlined in ink mark the end of every verse. An *alif*, half in green and half in red, indicates the end of every fifth verse, while groups of ten verses are marked by a red square. A decorative band with yellow and green lozenges alternating on a green ground divides the two surahs; this simple illumination is followed by the title of the second of the two surahs introduced by the word *Fātiḥatu* ('The opening of ...') and the number of verses. This phrase has been written twice, once in black and once in red.

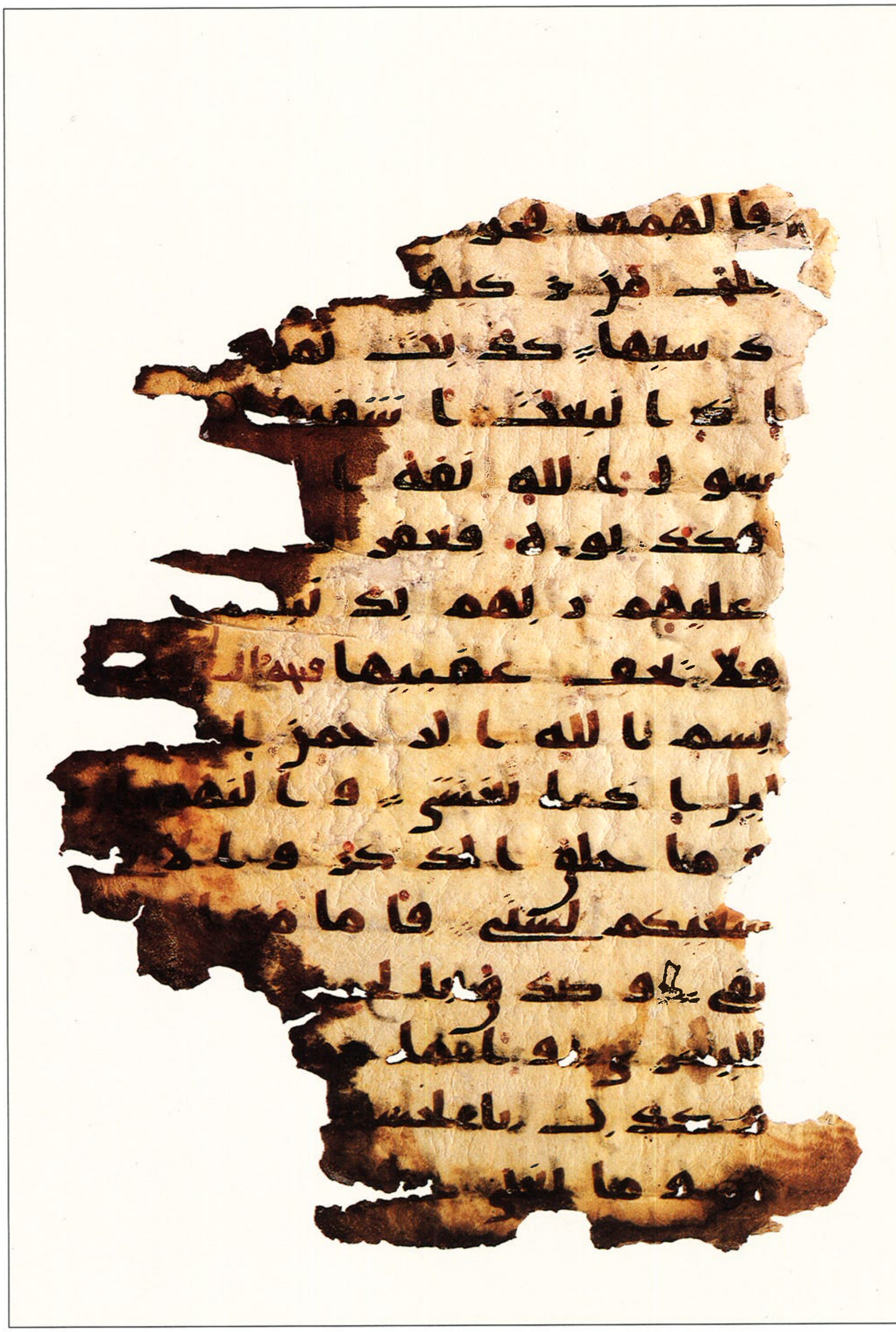
5
Two folios
Second half of the 8th century AD

Both folios fragmentary, with parts of 16 lines surviving; largest dimensions now 29.2×24cm (KFQ42) and 25×18.5cm (KFQ62)
Material Parchment; the verso is the hair side in both cases
Text area Largest dimensions now 24.2×21cm (KFQ42) and 23×16.5cm (KFQ62)
Script Style A
Accession nos KFQ42 and KFQ62
Other fragments from the same Qur'an Rome, Biblioteca Vaticana, MSS arab.21–25 (Levi della Vida 1947, pp.16–19, pl.9); Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS.arab.330d (Déroche 1983, no.10); and the Bahnasa Qur'an (Moritz 1905, pls 39–40)

Both folios are severely damaged, and only about half of the written surface has survived. The text of the first folio (KFQ42) runs from *Sūrat al-ṭāriq* (LXXXVI), verse 17, to *Sūrat al-ghāshiyah* (LXXXVIII), verse 22, while the text of the second runs from *Sūrat al-balad* (XC), verse 6, to *Sūrat al-layl* (XCII), verse 11. The first folio probably came between two of the folios in the Vatican Library, MSS arab. 24 and 25, while the second fragment is probably part of the folio that came after the Vatican MS.arab.25.

The text is in brown ink. There are many diacritical strokes, including a dot below the letter to identify *fā'* and a dot above the letter to identify *qāf*. In a few instances, red dots have been used to indicate the vocalization. Two rows of oblique strokes (I.I.3) mark the end of every verse, and there is one instance (KFQ42, verso, line 4) where an *alif* outlined in ink has been added over a verse marker to indicate the end of a group of five verses, and three lines below a circular device outlined in ink (I.A.I) have been added at the end of a group of ten verses. At the end of *Sūrat al-A'lā* (KFQ42, verso, line 1), the title is given in red ink as *Sabbiḥi'sma Rabbika* and is followed by the verse count. The title of *Sūrat al-layl* (KFQ62, verso, line 8), preceded by the word *Fātiḥatu* ('The opening of ...'), has been written in the space left after the end of *Sūrat al-shams* (XCI).

As Levi della Vida has already noted, the script of these fragments is rather stout: the line is thick, and the vertical strokes are short. The *alif* has a long, flat tail and sometimes seems to curve slightly to the right, as do *ṭā'* and *ẓā'* (see KFQ42, verso, line 5). Final *nūn* has no marked head. The body of the letter is rounded, with a constriction caused as the pen turned to form the final return, which moves upwards. The ductus of the medial form of *hā'* can be traced with ease, as the bar, which leans to the left, emerges clearly from the body of the letter, and the two 'eyes' betray the movement of the pen. Final *qāf* has an extended final tail. When *'ayn* is in the middle of a word, it consists of an open V with a vertical right-hand antenna. At the beginning of a word, it takes the form of a hook open to the right and starts with a thick stroke. The example in KFQ42, verso, line 6, shows that independent *'ayn* had a long, flat tail that runs along the base line.



5 (KFQ 62) verso



5 (KFQ 42) verso



6 recto

6
Single folio
Second half of the 8th century AD or early 9th

20.8×25 cm, with
16 lines to the page
Material Parchment; the recto is the hair side
Text area 16.6×21.8 cm
Script Style B.Ib
Accession no. KFQ20

The decoration and page layout of this folio are as characteristic of B.Ib manuscripts as are the forms of the letters. The slender appearance of this script was inherited from Hijazi, although B.Ib is usually far more regular than Hijazi. (A possible exception is cat.2 above, a Hijazi fragment written in a hand as regular as that of cat.6.) As in other B scripts, the base line does not always serve as a support, and some letters extend beneath it even in their medial forms, as if to balance the weight of those which stand above the line. *Jīm,* for example, looks like an oblique stroke placed across the line, while *mīm* is circular, and *hā'* is a half-circle, with the base line running between the two 'eyes', one above and one below.

In B.Ib, the width of the line is almost uniform: the return at the base of independent *alif* is flat and rather thick, for example. The same lack of contrast can be observed in the final forms of other letters such as *nūn*, in which the pen seems to flow evenly; a tendency to curve the body of this letter slightly can also be detected.

The text runs from *Sūrat al-kahf* (XVIII), verse 86, to *Sūrat Maryam* (XIX), verse 4. It is written in dark brown ink, with diacritical strokes. Red dots indicate the vocalization. Triangular clusters of three strokes (I.I.4) mark the end of every verse, and two concentric circles in ink (I.A.I) indicate the end of every tenth verse. For the hundredth verse, at XVIII, 99, four small semicircular figures have been added to make a kind of cross. The last word of *Sūrat al-kahf* is followed by the expression *Hādhihi khātimatu sūrati aṣḥābi'l-kahfi* ('This is the conclusion of *Sūrat al-kahf*') and the number of verses written in red.



7 recto

7
Single folio
Second half of the 8th century AD or early 9th

Fragmentary (largest dimensions now 14.2 × 16.5 cm), with parts of 15 lines surviving
Material Parchment; the recto is the hair side
Text area Length 12.8 cm; maximum width now 16.5 cm
Script Close to style B.I
Accession no. KFQ27
Cat.8 is from the same Qur'an

This folio is badly damaged, and parts of the text, including perhaps a line at the bottom, are missing. The surviving text, which runs from *Sūrat al-aʿrāf* (VII), verse 204, to *Sūrat al-anfāl* (VIII), verse 15, was written in black ink, with diacritical strokes. (Note that *qāf* is marked by a dot under the letter.) There is no vocalization. The verses are divided by clusters of strokes (1.1.1). A decorative band was drawn in brown ink between the two surahs, but only the central part survives. This is divided into three panels: that on the left is divided by x-shapes into smaller areas decorated with circular motifs; the middle panel is filled with a rope-work pattern; and the right-hand compartment is decorated by a series of small circles between two festoon-like bands. Arrow-like devices extend above and below the central section and mark its junctions with the other elements.

8
Single folio
Second half of the 8th century AD or early 9th

Fragmentary (largest dimensions now 12.2×22.4 cm), with more than 13 lines to the page
Material Parchment; the verso is the hair side
Text area 10.3×20.7 cm
Script Close to style B.I
Accession no. KFQ28
Cat.7 is from the same Qur'an

The text – *Sūrat Yūnus* (x), verse 104, to *Sūrat Hūd* (xI), verse 10, with a lacuna between x, 109 and xI, 3 – was written in black ink, with diacritical strokes. (Note that, as in cat.7, *qaf* is marked by a dot under the letter.) There is no vocalization. The verses are divided by clusters of strokes (I.I.I). At the end of *Sūrat Yūnus* the title and verse count of the surah are given, preceded by the word *Khātimat* ('The conclusion of ...'). The two surahs were also separated by a decorative band drawn in brown ink, of which only a fragment survives. The band is divided by x-shapes into lozenges and triangles; a circular device decorates the crossing of each x, and arrow-like patterns, crosses and squares have been drawn in the lozenges. A crude, calix-shaped vignette extends into the inner margin.

9
Two folios
9th century AD

16×20.3 cm, with 16 lines to the page
Material Parchment; the verso is the hair side in both cases
Text area 9.8×15.5 cm in KFQ13, and 9.7×15.5 cm in KFQ14
Script Style B.II
Accession nos KFQ13, KFQ14
Another fragment from the same Qur'an Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS.arab.340f (Déroche 1983, no.34, and pl.XI)

These two fragments were adjoining folios in the same manuscript: the text of the first folio (KFQ13) runs from *Sūrat al-furqān* (XXV), verse 75, to *Sūrat al-shu'arā'* (XXVI), verse 25, while the second folio contains *Sūrat al-shu'arā'*, verses 25–53. In both cases the recto is the flesh side, and the verso is the hair side, and this suggests that they were located in the second part of a quire and did not form two halves of a bifolio.

The text was written in black ink. Red dots indicate the vocalization. A gold dot (2.2.1) has been added to the original verse markers, which each consisted of a single stroke. Every fifth verse is indicated by a gold Kufic *hā'*, and at the end of every group of ten verses there is a 2'.A.II device whose centre contains a letter in gold on a red ground giving the number of verses in the *abjad* system. The title of *Sūrat al-shu'arā'* and its verse count are written in gold outlined in ink. The lower inner corner and the upper outer corner have been damaged.

The script of these two folios is marked by the main features of B.II: independent *alif*, for example, has its short lower hook, and *nūn* at the end of a word has a vertical body with a short perpendicular lower stroke. The calligrapher has often decided to extend the retroflex *yā'* at the end of a word below the line. Less conspicuous, but very typical, are *mīm* and the medial forms of *hā'* and *jīm*, which straddle the line in a manner not found in other scripts of the same period.

Besides its letter forms, B.II can also be recognized by its overall proportions: it is usually a small script (the height of the line varies between about 4 and 6mm); roughly 75 per cent of B.II manuscripts have 14, 15 or, as in this case, 16 lines to the page; and the height of the text area is usually two-thirds the height of the page (Déroche 1989, pp.102–4).

Other aspects of B.II manuscripts are also very characteristic. The 'ideal' B.II manuscript has 16 lines to the page and is written on folios that measure 12×18 cm (Déroche 1989, pp.104–7). In most cases, the verses are not divided, but, where they are, I.I.I devices are employed. (In this respect, cat.9 is an exception.) In plainer manuscripts, groups of ten verses are marked by a red circle (I.A.I), but in more elaborate examples a 2'.A.II roundel was used (Déroche 1989, pp.108–11). It seems that B.II manuscripts were generally single-volume Qur'ans rather than parts of multi-volume sets.



8 recto



9 (KFQ13) verso



10 folios 34b–35a

10
Qur'an fragment 9th century AD

49 folios, 11×17.8 cm, with 17 lines to the page
Material Parchment
Text area 8.4×13.9 cm
Script Style B.II
Binding Modern
Accession nos QUR48 and QUR80

The text is written in black ink. Red dots indicate the vocalization. Three strokes (I.I.I) mark the end of each verse. The end of each group of ten verses is indicated by a plain red circle (I.A.I) with a letter at its centre giving the number of verses according to the *abjad* system. The title and verse count of each surah are in red, and at the end of every surah the verse count is given in *abjad* at the centre of a red I.A.I circle. Folio 11 is a repair, and a later hand has added the indication of a *ḥizb* and a *juz'* division in the margin of folio 14b and 15a.

The quires of this manuscript have ten folios, which are arranged in the usual fashion: the hair side of the first folio is the recto, and the following folios are arranged on the same lines.

If the width of the text area is divided by the height, the quotient is very close to that of the golden rectangle. The same seems to hold true for the page as a whole, but it is always difficult to come to any firm conclusions about folio size, firstly because folios were often heavily trimmed in the course of the frequent restorations required by the weakness of early bindings, and secondly because we do not know whether the parchment was cut according to the natural size of the hide or to give the calligrapher the size of folio he wanted.

The text contained in this fragment is as follows: *Sūrat al-an'ām* (VI), verse 153, to *Sūrat al-a'rāf* (VII), verse 22 (folios 1–2); *Sūrat al-a'rāf*, verses 46–172 (folios 3–11); *Sūrat al-a'rāf*, verse 206, to *Sūrat Hūd* (XI), verse 25 (folios 12–36); *Sūrat Hūd*, verses 40–73 (folios 37–38); and *Sūrat Hūd*, verse 89, to *Sūrat Yūsuf* (XII), verse 29 (folios 39–49).





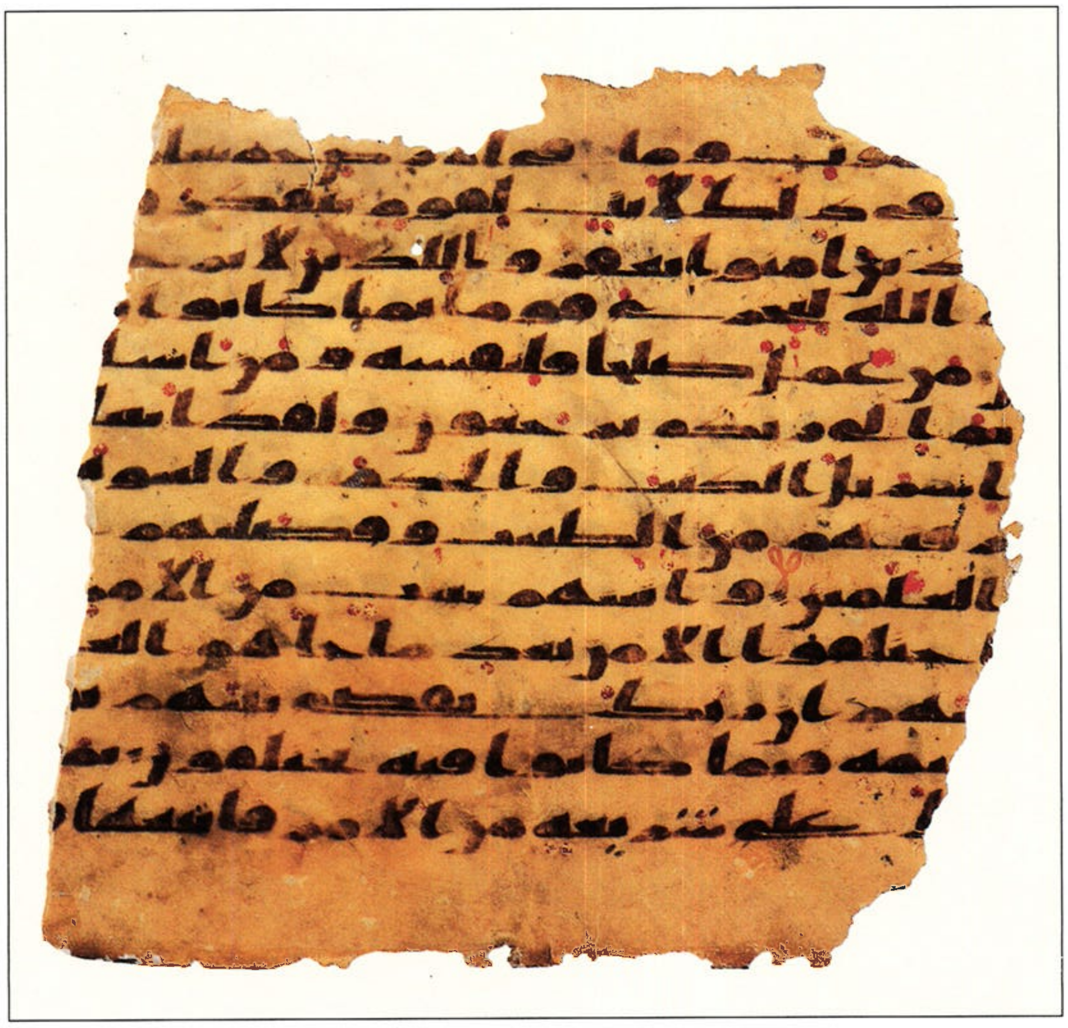
11 recto

11
Single folio
End of the 8th century AD

16.5 × 22 cm, with
16 lines to the page
Material Parchment, dyed
deep orange; the recto
is the hair side
Text area 13.2 × 18 cm
Script Style C.Ib
Accession no. KFQ93
Published Sotheby's, London,
12 October 1990, lot no.196
Another fragment from the same Qur'an
New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art,
Rogers Fund, MS. 40.164.100

It is the colour of this folio that arrests one's attention rather than the script. Despite the fame of the Blue Qur'an (see cat.42), examples of Qur'ans written on dyed parchment are relatively rare. In fact, Grohmann (1967, p. 111) considered the Blue Qur'an the only certain example of dyed parchment and refers to the presence of saffron-coloured fragments in the collection of Archduke Rainer only with great caution. Cat.11 and other examples found in Istanbul show that dyeing parchment was more widespread than Grohmann allowed and that saffron and similar colours were the most frequently used for Qur'an manuscripts, but fragments dyed in pink and violet also exist, perhaps as the result of attempts to imitate the Byzantine purple (Huart 1908, p.12). Some of the information provided by Huart with regard to dyeing paper could just as well be applied to parchment.

The text of this folio – verses 17–27 of *Sūrat Yūnus* (X) – is written in dark brown ink. White dots correspond to the vocalization, but the original colour was probably black. Clusters of three oblique strokes (I.1.1) mark the end of each verse. Every fifth verse is indicated by an *alif* outlined in red ink, and every tenth verse by a white circle (I.D.1).



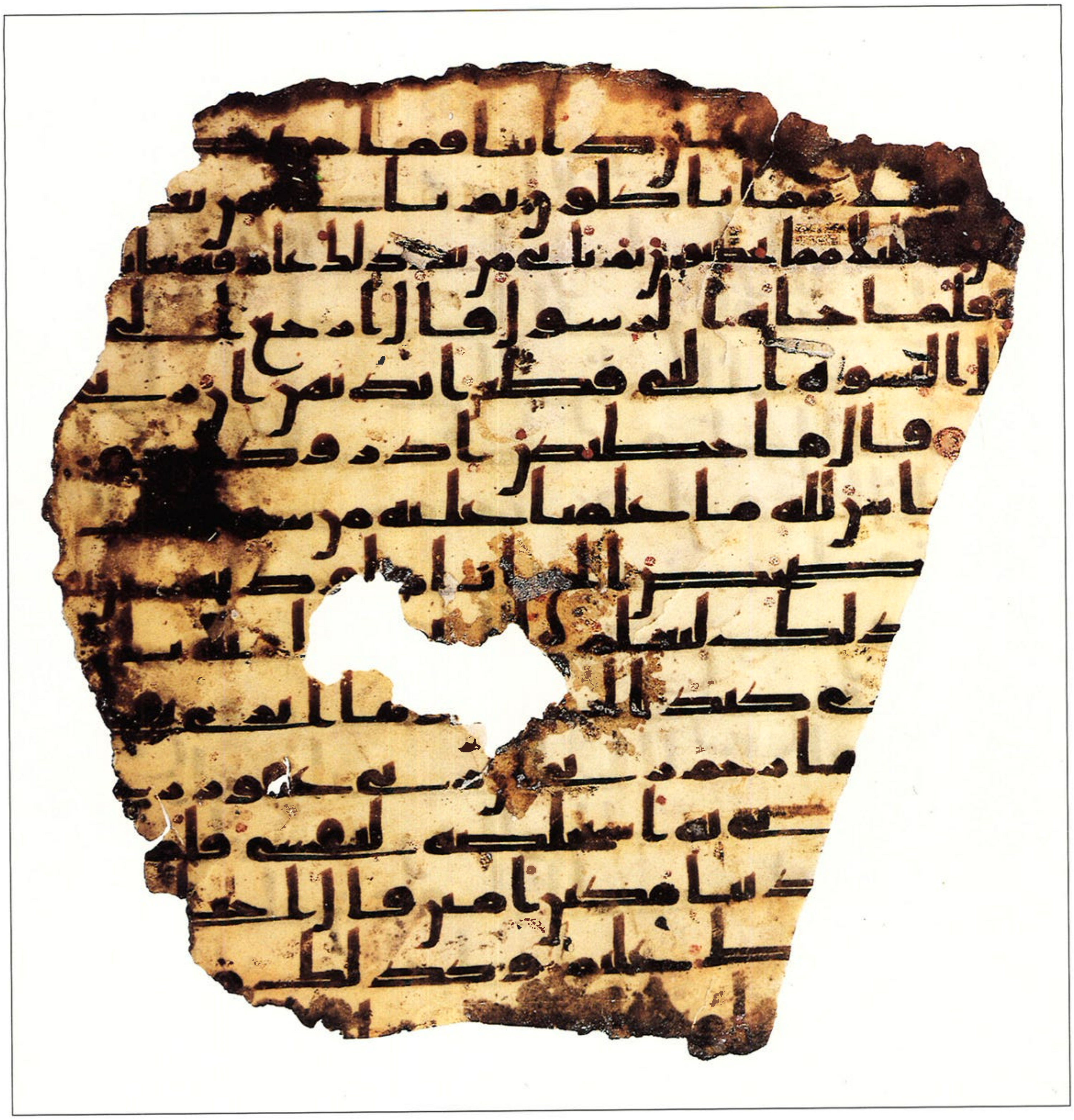
12 recto

12
Single folio
Late 8th century AD or early 9th

Fragmentary (largest dimensions now 16×16.5 cm), with 13 lines to the page
Material Parchment; the recto is the hair side
Text area Length 12.2 cm; maximum width now 16.5 cm
Script Related to style C.Ia
Accession no. KFQ15
Comparative items For style C.Ia, see Moritz 1905, pls 1–12; and Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS. arab. 324a (Déroche 1983, no. 45)

The text – verses 13–23 of *Sūrat al-jāthiyah* (XLV) – is written in brown ink. There are diacritical strokes, some of which were added later. In a few cases, red dots indicate the vocalization. Clusters of three strokes (I.I.I) mark the end of every verse. Over this device, a red three-branched decoration has been added at the end of every fifth verse. A red circle (I.A.I) has also been placed at the end of a group of ten verses.

The script is intermediate between C.Ia and that of other manuscripts related to group C. These can be identified both by their letter forms and the size of the manuscripts, which can be huge 'lectionaries', although some volumes are of a more normal size.



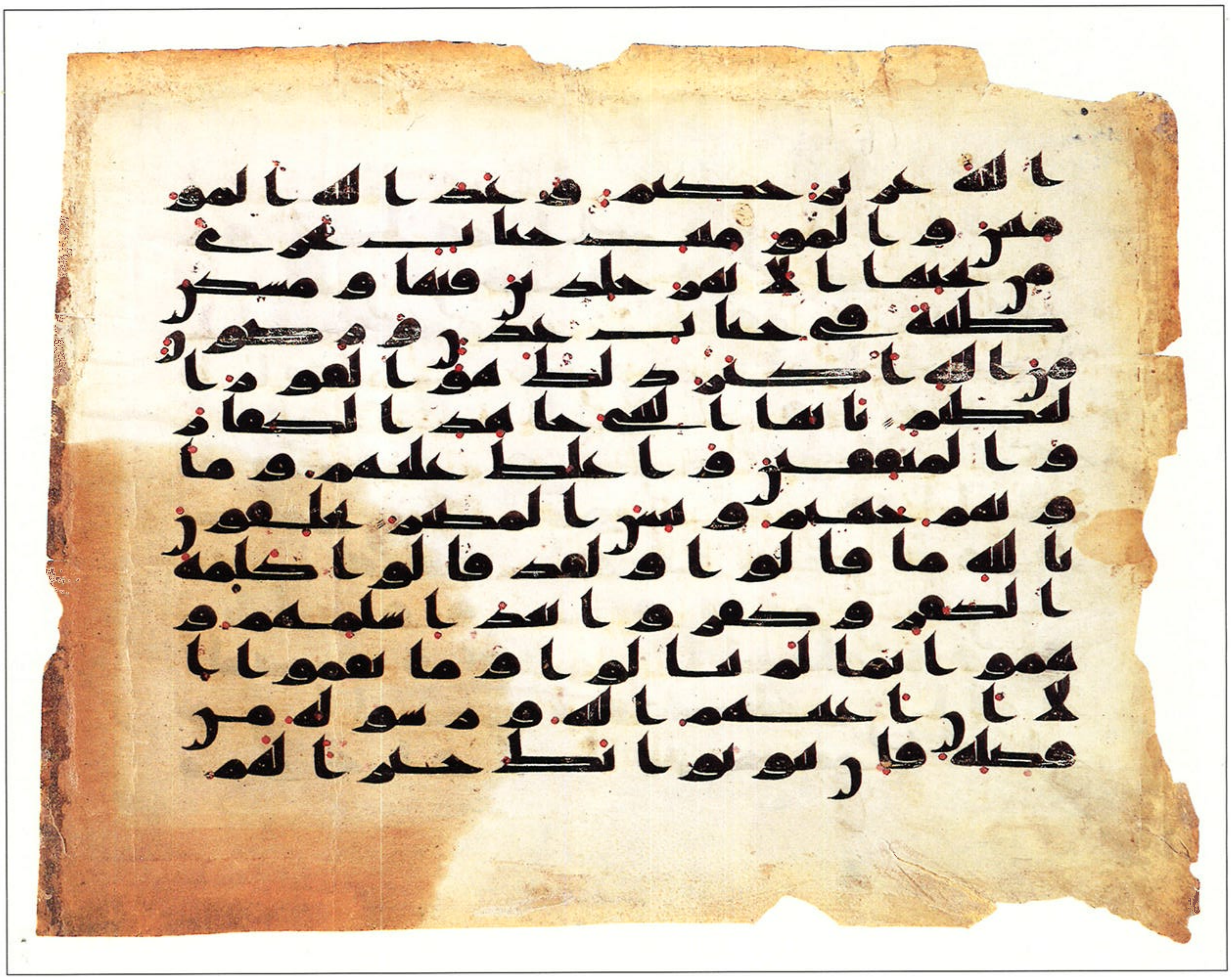
13 verso

13
Single folio
Late 8th century AD or early 9th

Fragmentary (largest dimensions now 21×18.5 cm), with more than 14 lines to the page
Material Parchment; the verso is the hair side
Text area Reduced to 18.1×18.5 cm
Script Close to style C.Ib
Accession no. KFQ33

Although the hand of this fragment lacks one feature of style C.Ib – the triangular endings of final *nūn* and *lām* – it resembles this style in other respects: the tripartite final *nūn*, the almost triangular initial and medial *hā'* (verso, line 5), and the peculiar form of final *qāf*, with its tail on the line below (verso, line 8).

The text – *Sūrat Yūsuf* (XII), verses 39–56, with a lacuna between verses 45 and 47 – is written in dark brown ink, with some diacritical strokes. Red dots indicate the vocalization. Clusters of three strokes (I.I.I) mark the end of every verse, and a red circle (I.A.I) indicates the end of a group of ten verses.



14 recto

14
Single folio
Perhaps the 9th century AD

30.3×39 cm, with
13 lines to the page
Material Parchment; the verso is the hair side
Text area 19.4×31.4 cm
Script A style close to C.II
Accession no. KFQ44

The script of this folio seems intermediate between C.II and C.III. While some letter forms are roughly similar in both styles, others are not. Among the latter are the final form of *nūn,* the combined form of *lām* and *alif,* and independent *alif.* In this folio, the first two are strongly reminiscent of the C.II script seen in Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS.arab.334e (Déroche 1983, no.53 and pl.XIV), whereas independent *alif*, with its almost flat tail, stands closer to C.III. Curiously enough, the ending of *wāw* is similar in shape to the lower end of final *nūn*, but final *mīm* resembles that seen in C.III manuscripts. Vertical shafts, both long and short, end with a thin stroke which extends slightly beyond the bevelled ending of the shaft itself.

The text is *Sūrat al-tawbah* (IX), verses 69–74. It is written in black ink. Red dots indicate the vocalization. Three strokes in ink (I.I.I) mark the end of every verse, and a pointed quatrefoil indicates the end of a group of ten verses on the recto.



15 verso

15
Single folio
Perhaps the 9th century AD

20.8×29.3 cm, with
16 lines to the page
Material Parchment; the verso
is the hair side
Text area 15.9×23.7 cm
Script Close to style C.II
Accession no. KFQ19

The script of this folio is close to C.II. The shapes of independent *alif* and final *nūn* are related to this style, although the tail of final *mīm* is not as fully developed. The calligrapher almost never used *mashq* and sometimes had to complete the line with strokes in order to justify the text on the left (verso, lines 1, 3, 6 etc.); in some cases, a double stroke was employed.

The text – *Sūrat al-naḥl* (XVI), verse 127, to *Sūrat al-isrā'* (XVII), verse 16 – is written in black ink, with diacritical strokes. Red dots indicate the vocalization. Clusters of three oblique strokes (I.I.I) mark the ends of the verses. The end of every fifth verse is indicated by a red *alif* outlined in ink, while a red circle (I.A.I) marks the end of a group of ten verses. There is a decorative band between the two surahs. It contains a frame in which the end (*khātimah*) of *Sūrat al-naḥl* and its verse count are given in red. In the other part of the band, an interlace of x-shaped loops and ovals divides the field into areas painted in red, yellow and green. This illumination is surrounded by red and yellow fillets and is accompanied by a heart-shaped vignette in the same colours.



15 recto



16 folio 2b

16
Bifolio
Second half of the 9th century AD or early 10th

28 × 39.5 cm, with
15 lines to the page
Material Parchment
Text area 19.3 × 30.2 cm
Script Style C.III
Accession no. KFQ63

In this example, independent *alif* has the curious flattened tail typical of C.III but also encountered in manuscripts closer to C.II (see cat. 14). The crescent-shaped final *nūn*, the almost triangular final *mīm* (its tail is reduced to a thin spur) and the inwardly curving arms of *lām-alif* are also common features of C.III. As is often the case with manuscripts written in this script, the ending of *'alā* is written with a *lām-alif* instead of the usual *lām-yā' maqṣūrah* (see folio 2a, lines 1, 4 and 5).

The first folio contains *Sūrat al-aḥzāb* (XXXIII), verses 4–14, and the second contains verses 54–70 of the same surah. The text is written in black ink; the diacritical strokes were added later. Red dots indicate the vocalization.

Three strokes (I.I.I) mark the end of every verse, and an ornament composed of a group of six red and green dots surrounded by a yellow circle has been placed at the end of a group of ten verses.



17 recto

17
Single folio
Second half of the 9th century AD or early 10th

20.4 × 30.8 cm, with
15 lines to the page
Material Parchment; the recto
is the hair side
Text area 15.3 × 23.8 cm
Script Style C.III
Accession no. KFQ45

The text – *Sūrat al-jāthiyah* (XLV), verse 37, to *Sūrat al-aḥqāf* (XLVI), verse 10 – is written in black ink; the diacritical dots were added later. Red dots indicate the vocalization. Three thin strokes (I.I.I) mark the end of every verse. At the beginning of *Sūrat al-aḥqāf,* the title and the verse count of the surah, preceded by the word *Fātiḥah,* are written in gold. They are set within a frame at the far right of a decorative band made up of six interlacing oval rings; the vignettes at either end are step vases from which a complex floriation emerges. The colours (yellow, green and red), motifs and outline of this decoration are close to those of a Qur'an folio in San'a' (von Bothmer 1987, p.187, fig.9), but the script is quite different.



18 recto

18
Single folio
Second half of the 9th century AD or early 10th

Fragmentary (largest dimensions now 18.8 × 23.8 cm), with 15 lines to the page
Material Parchment; the verso is the hair side
Text area Length 11.5 cm; maximum width now 20 cm
Script Style C.III
Accession no. KFQ57
Another fragment from the same Qur'an Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS.arab.333c (Déroche 1983, no.56, and pl.XVa)

The text – verses 186–98 of *Sūrat al-aʿrāf* (VII) – is written in black ink, with few diacritical strokes. Red dots indicate the vocalization. The verses are not separated from one another. The folio is damaged: the inner margin and some letters have been lost, as well as part of the upper margin.

Although the calligrapher made some use of *mashq*, on occasion (recto, lines 1 and 6, for example) he had to use short strokes to fill up the end of a line.



19 recto

19
Single folio
9th century AD

14.6 × 21 cm, with
5 lines to the page
Material Parchment; the recto is the hair side
Text area 7.5 × 14 cm
Script Close to style D.I
Accession no. KFQ84
Published Sotheby's, London, 13 October 1989, lot no.77
Other fragments from the same Qur'an Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS.arab.5178f (Déroche 1983, no.III); Tunis, National Library, MS.Rutbi 198 (Shabbuh 1956, pp.353–4 and pl.6; al-Buhli al-Niyal 1963, no.2, where two folios with a shortened version of the *waqfiyyah* are illustrated; Lings & Safadi 1976, nos 16 and 17; Paris 1982, no.346); Geneva 1985, no.1; Kairouan, Islamic Art Museum (two folios; Lings & Safadi 1976, nos 18 and 19 and pl.III; Paris 1982, nos 347–8); Sotheby's, London, 15 October 1984, lot nos 218–19; 25 June 1985, lot no.5; 21–2 November 1985, lot nos 290–91; 22 May 1986, lot no.248; 1 June 1987, lot no.78; 11 April 1988, lot no.114; 10 October 1988, lot no.170; 10 April 1989, lot no.169; and 26 April 1990, lot no.140; Christie's, London, 9 October 1990, lot no.45; and Sotheby's, London, 11 October 1991, lot no.892

This folio came from a multi-part Qur'an which is known to have been kept in Kairouan. Together with the Blue Qur'an (see cat.42), it is one of the most celebrated instances of chrysography. This practice was already in use in the early 8th century AD, for Ibn al-Nadim related how, after Khalid ibn Abi'l-Hayyaj had designed an inscription in gold for the mosque at Medina, the caliph 'Omar II asked him to write a copy of the Qur'an in the same fashion (Huart 1908, pp.71–2).

The text is *Sūrat Sabā'* (XXXIV), verses 43–4, written in gold and outlined in brown ink. The diacritical marks are unusually precise: they mostly consist of strokes, but minute letters *'ayn* and *rā'* distinguish these letters from their homographs. The vocalization is indicated by red dots, while green dots mark *hamzah*, and blue dots mark both *shaddah* and the vowel. A gold 3.1.4 device marks the end of every verse.



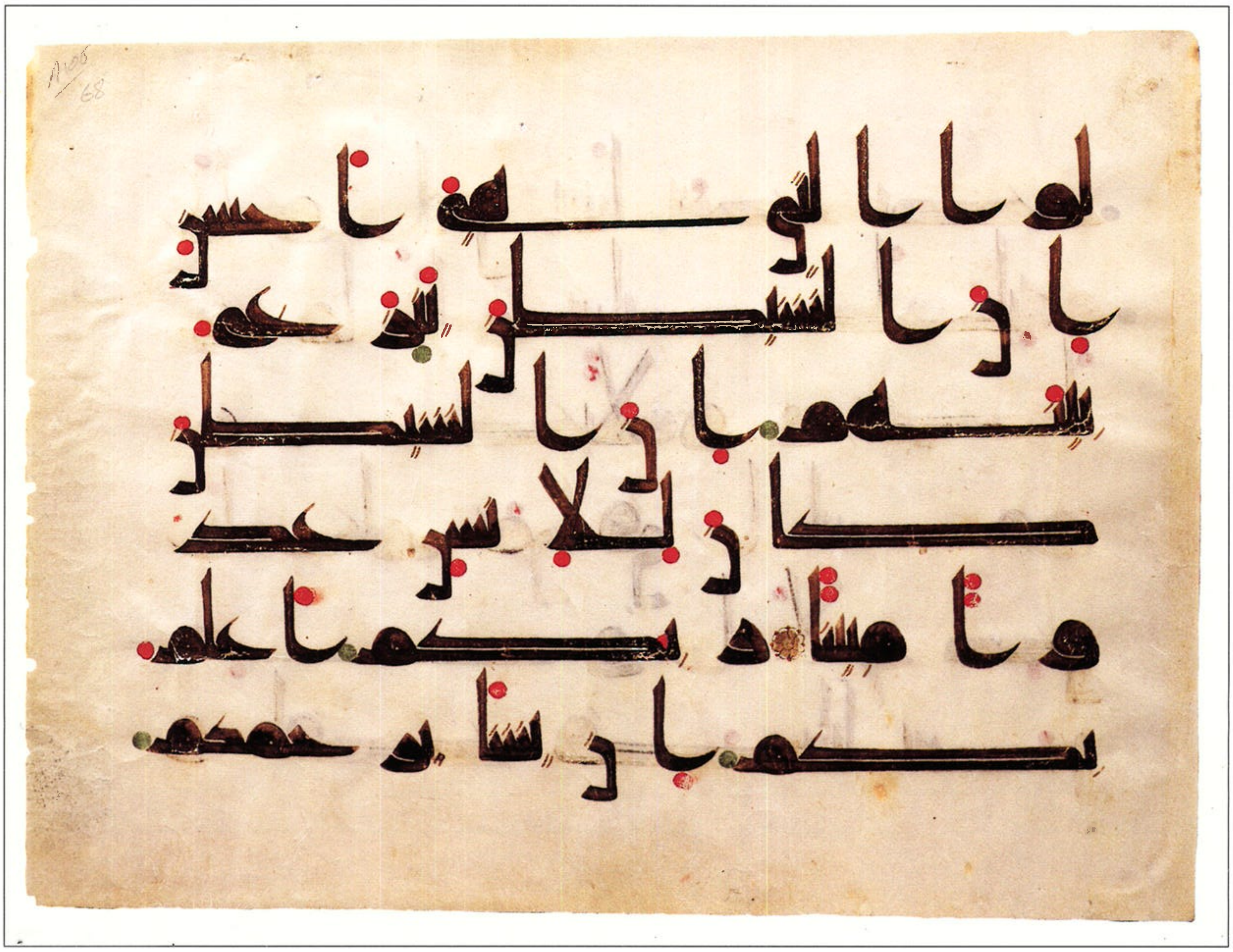
20 verso

20
Single folio
9th century AD

19.5×27.2 cm, with
6 lines to the page
Material Parchment; the verso
is the hair side
Text area 12.2×23 cm
Script Style D.I
Accession no. KFQ67

The text is *Sūrat al-nisā'* (IV), verses 104–7. It is written in black ink, with diacritical strokes, also in ink. Red dots indicate the vocalization. A gold 3.1.1 device marks the end of every verse, while groups of five verses are marked by a gold Kufic *hā'*.

On the verso, where the ink has taken more firmly, a flower decoration in gold, possibly Ottoman, was added when this folio was part of an album or used as a *levha*.



21 recto

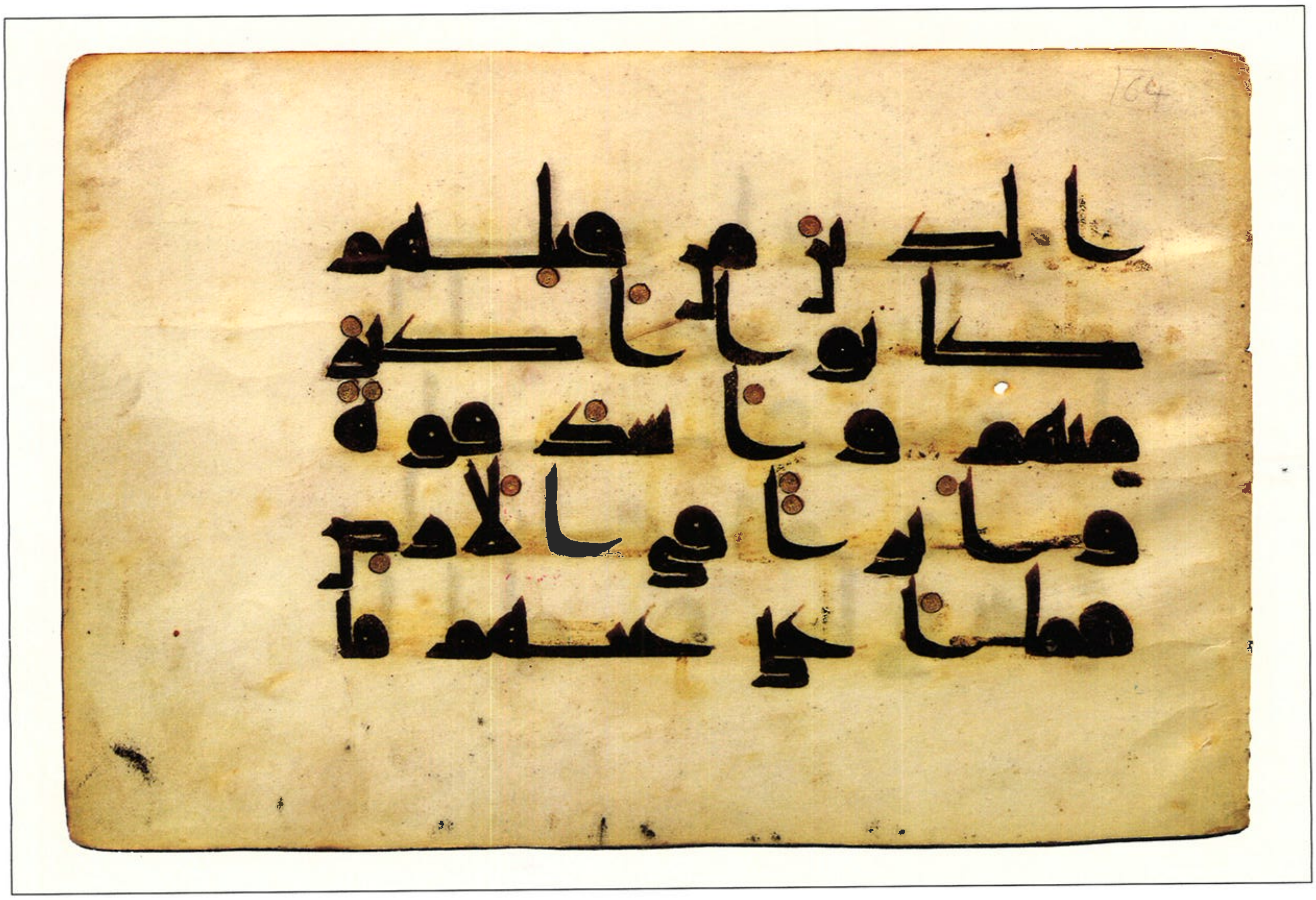
21
Single folio
9th century AD

20.8 × 27.8 cm, with
6 lines to the page
Material Parchment; the recto is the hair side
Text area 12.9 × 22.5 cm
Script Style D.I
Accession no. KFQ68

This folio is a beautiful example of one of the most impressive calligraphic styles of the Abbasid period. Perfect mastery of the pen is suggested by the horizontal lines, which are subtly underlined by the use of *mashq*, and by the precision of the crescent-shaped lower return of independent *alif*. This mastery explains the fascination exercised by the D.I style in its time, a fascination that is shown by the numerous variations upon it. Only a limited number of manuscripts attain this sober beauty, and many of these were bequeathed to mosques, as in the cases of the Qur'ans of Amajur and ʿAbd al-Munʿim (Rice 1955, p.2; Arberry 1967, no.16; James 1980, p.20; Déroche 1983, pp.147–9; and Déroche, forthcoming).

The distinctive letters of D.I are the independent form of *alif* and the final form of *nūn*, whose head is somewhat fatter than the vertical part of the body and whose lower return curves slightly upward. The medial form of *ʿayn*, independent *lām-alif* and final *qāf* should also be noted.

This folio contains *Sūrat al-isrāʾ* (XVII), verses 53–5. The text is written in black ink, with diacritical strokes which are also in ink. The vocalization is indicated by red dots; the green dots seem to correspond to *sukūn*. The end of every verse is marked by a gold 3.1.2 device.



22 recto

22
Single folio
9th century AD

15.2×22.8 cm, with
5 lines to the page
Material Parchment; the recto
is the hair side
Text area 7.5×16 cm
Script A style close to D.I
Accession no. KFQ64
Another fragment from the same Qur'an
Istanbul, Topkapı Palace Library, MS.EH30
(Karatay 1962, no. 53)

The text – verses 82–3 of *Sūrat al-mu'min* (XL) – is written in black ink; there are no diacriticals, except perhaps a red dot (verso, line 2, under a *jīm*). The vocalization is indicated by gold dots, a rather unusual occurrence. A gold 3.1.2 device marks the end of every verse.



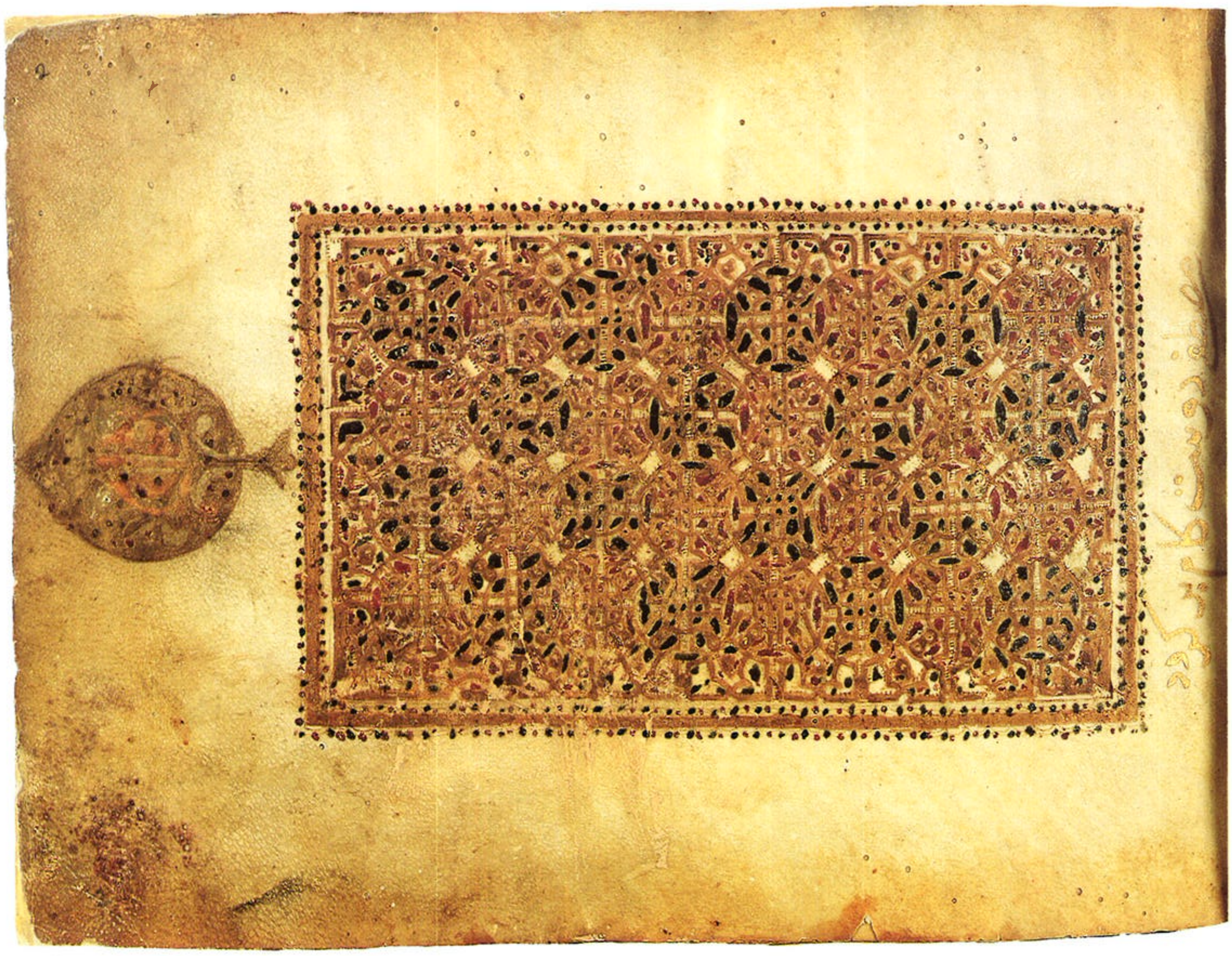
23 recto

23
Single folio
9th century AD

Fragmentary (largest dimensions now 16.8×28.5 cm), with 15 lines to the page
Material Parchment; the verso is the hair side
Text area 12.5×21.5 cm
Script A style related to D.I
Accession no. KFQ55

This fragment shows a modified form of D.I: usually a large script, its dimensions have been reduced here, and the different type of pen needed has had an effect on the forms of some letters, particularly *nūn*. Such adaptations seem to have been fairly rare, to judge by the surviving manuscripts.

The text – *Sūrat al-Rūm* (XXX), verse 54, to *Sūrat Luqmān* (XXXI), verse 7 – is written in black ink, without diacritical strokes. Red dots indicate the vocalization. Individual verses are not punctuated, but a gold Kufic *hā'* marks the end of every fifth verse, and a 4.A.II device, with the number of verses written out in gold D script on what was probably a red ground, indicates groups of ten verses. At the beginning of *Sūrat Luqmān*, the title and the verse count have been written in gold D script, outlined in ink. The lower part of the folio has been lost.



24 folio 3a



24 folio 2a

24
Part 2 of a 30-part Qur'an North Africa or Egypt, end of the 9th century AD

99 folios, 20.6 × 28.2 cm, with 6 lines to the page
Material Parchment
Text area 10.4 × 19.2 cm
Script Style D.II
Documentation An attribution and a record of ownership
Binding Modern
Accession no. QUR372
Comparative material This volume may belong to the same set as Copenhagen, Royal Library, C.1 (Lindberg 1830, pl. IX); Istanbul, Topkapı Palace Library, MSS EH 25, EH 26 (folio 21) and EH 28 (Karatay 1962, nos 32 and 35); and Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS.arab.349e (Déroche 1983, no. 114, and pl. xvb)

One of the most obvious characteristics of the D.II script is the way that the upper parts of letters such as *alif* are bent slightly to the left. Another is the shape of final *nūn*, which is quite close to that of D.I but is written in a coarser manner.

This manuscript offers an extensive example of the type of decoration used with this script. With one exception (a frame at the end of the Topkapı MS.EH 28), the material previously available contained only verse markers and vignettes, whereas cat. 24 opens and closes with double pages of illumination (folios 1b–2a and 98b–99a), and the first and last pages of text (folios 2b–3a and 97b–98a) are written within a frame from which a median spearhead-shaped vignette projects into the outer vertical margins. The designs of the four full-page illuminations are all different, but they are all based on the quotient of the golden rectangle. Ruling seems to be limited to the outer frame of the illumination (see folios 98 and 99).

The first panel, that on folio 1b, measures 11.4 × 18.4 cm and contains an interlace pattern of gold circles spread over a field 9.6 × 16.9 cm. Three horizontal and five vertical rows of larger circles form the outline of the design and are either tangent or secant with smaller circles. Various coloured dots are scattered between the gold fillets that form the circles. A gold fillet running over a row of small overlapping circles drawn in ink and surrounded by coloured dots serves as a frame.

The panel on the facing page (11.6 × 18.6 cm; field, 10.3 × 17.2 cm) contains an interlace pattern which combines circles and straight lines. Outwardly, there seem to be four horizontal and eight vertical double gold fillets cut by circles of various sizes; in fact, the larger circles are the result of the juxtaposition of large octagons with four curved sides. Four of the larger circles in each horizontal row have been filled with green; they were selected so as to create staggered vertical rows. The frame is the same as that of folio 1b.

The illumination on folio 98b (11.1 × 18.1 cm; field, 9.6 × 16.5 cm) also relies on a pattern of interlacing circles, but here the diameter of the largest circles, which are emphasized by the use of double gold fillets, is greater, and there are only two rows of full circles. Again the frame is reduced to a gold fillet between coloured dots. On the opposite page (folio 99a), the illumination (11.1 × 16.4 cm; field, 9.6 × 16.4 cm) uses a very different repertory: circles still play a role, but a very subdued one. Two bands defined by double gold fillets form a continuous pattern of interlace which creates a complex cable effect in the field. The frame is the same as that in the other designs.

The median vignettes are closely related in shape, in the repertory of motifs employed and in the peculiar form of stem they share.

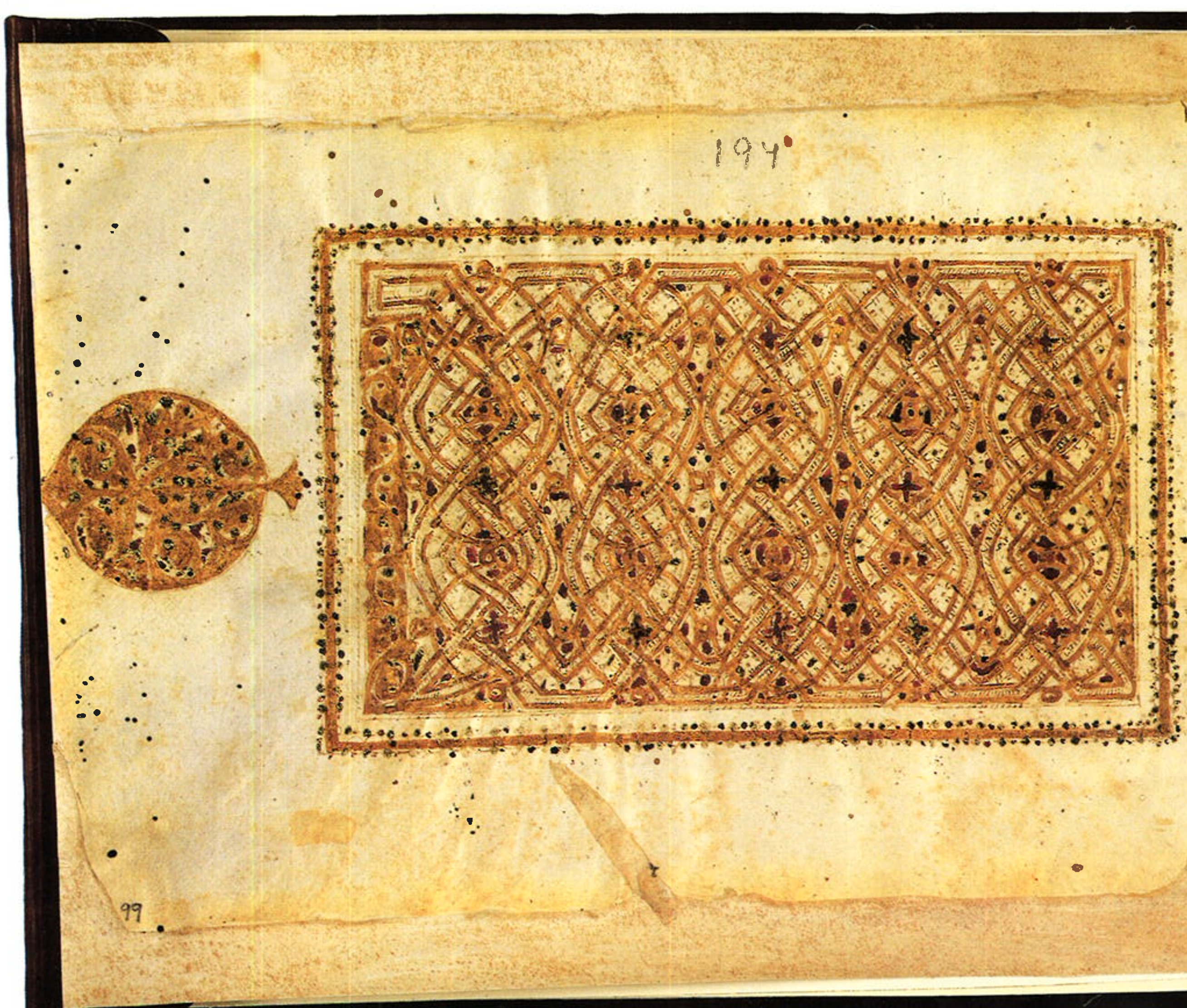
Part 2 of a 30-part Qur'an should contain verses 142–252 of *Sūrat al-baqarah* (II), but the loss of the leaf that lay between folios 78 and 79 means that verse 232 is missing. The text is written in dark brown ink, with the vocalization indicated by red dots. A peculiar 3.I.1 device separates the verses. There is a gold Kufic *hā'* at the end of every fifth verse, and a 3.C.1 device at the end of every tenth verse.

Most of the quires have ten folios, but the first has seven folios, the last has four, and there are two nine-folio quires, one of which (folio 77 onwards) has lost one leaf. Hair sides face flesh sides, as is usual, and the quires begin with the hair side on the outside.

A note on folio 1a attributes the copying of this manuscript to Hasan, while another note on the verso of the same leaf records that the volume was once the property of Mu'izz al-Din Muhammad al-Mansuri al-Husayni.



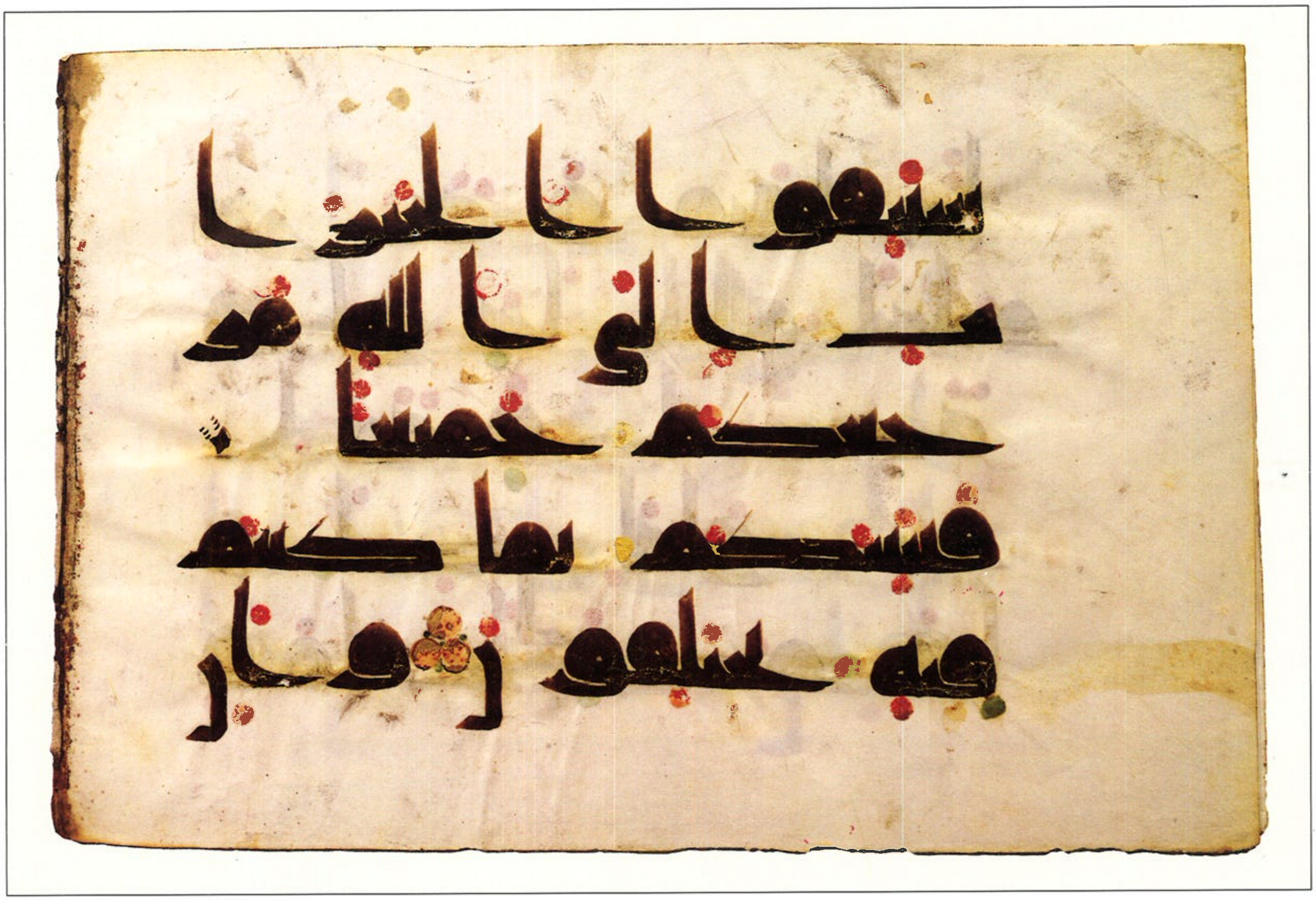
24 folios 47b–48a



24 folios 98b–99a







25 folio 5b

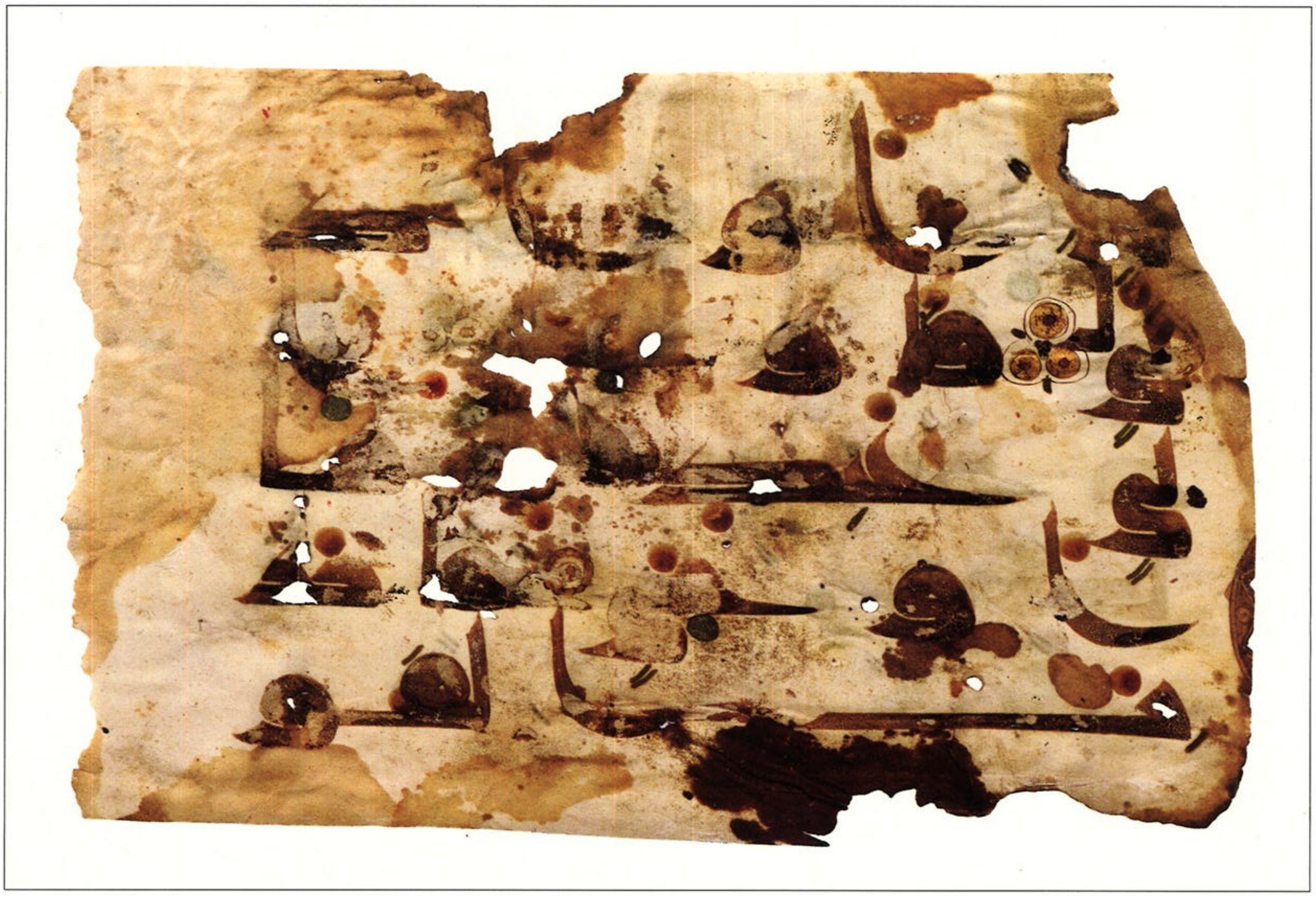
25
Five folios
Mid-9th century AD or later

19.8 × 29 cm, with
5 lines to the page
Material Parchment; folios 1a, 2b, 3a, 4a and 5b are the hair side
Text area 10.8 × 19.2 cm
Script Style D.III
Accession no. KFQ65

These five folios – two bifolios and one single leaf – contain part of the text of *Sūrat al-mā'idah* (V). The first bifolio was at the centre of a quire and contains verses 35–7. The second bifolio and the single folio were part of another quire and contain verses 44 (folio 3), 44–5 (folio 4) and 51–2 (folio 5).

It seems that D.III, like D.I, was usually a large script, and most of the fragments presented here have only five lines to the page. D.III can be distinguished from D.I by small changes in the way the letters are treated: the independent form of *alif* has a lower return that has been flattened on the line; and in final *nūn* there is no variation in the thickness of the line between the head and the vertical body of the letter, and its lower extremity is straight. As a whole, the accuracy that characterized the work of D.I calligraphers is absent. It is not unusual to find a stroke filling a space at the end of a line to even up the justification. Although this is often related to the division between two words, as on folio 3a, line 2, it sometimes betrays a lack of planning on the part of the copyist (folio 3a, line 5, or folio 5b, line 3).

The text is written in black ink and lacks diacriticals. The red dots indicate the vocalization, but the role of the green dots is not clear. Verses are punctuated by a 2.2.3B device in gold, red and green. On folio 1b the end of a group of five verses is marked by a 2'.A.II device at whose centre the word *khams* ('five') is written in gold on a red ground. The illumination is typical of manuscripts in this script, with which the 2.2.3 series of verse dividers is often used.



26 verso

26
Single folio
Mid-9th century AD or later

Fragmentary (largest dimensions now 16.5 × 26 cm), with 5 lines to the page
Material Parchment, badly stained; the recto is the hair side
Text area 10.3 × 20.7 cm
Script Style D.III
Accession no. KFQ35
Comparative item The script is very close to that of Istanbul, Topkapı Palace Library, MS.R.11 (Karatay 1962, no.20)

This folio contains *Sūrat al-najm* (LIII), verses 6–11. The text is written in brown ink, and the diacriticals are later additions. The red dots indicate the vocalization, while the green dots may indicate prolongation of *alif*. The verses are punctuated by 2.2.3C and 2.2.3D devices, except at the end of verse 10, where there is a circle of dots. The remains of a complementary ornament rendered in two colours of gold can be seen in the margins.



27 recto

27
Single folio
Mid-9th century AD or later

Somewhat fragmentary (largest dimensions now 13.6 × 21.4 cm), with 5 lines to the page
Material Parchment; the recto is the hair side
Text area 7.2 × 14.1 cm
Script Style D.III
Accession no. KFQ1

The text – verses 37–9 of *Sūrat al-dhāriyāt* (LI) – is written in black ink. The diacritical signs have also been added in ink: a peculiar v-shaped device indicates letters such as *sīn* which have no dots. The same hand has also added the orthoepics; red dots indicate the vocalization. The end of every verse is indicated by a gold 3.1.2 device.



28 recto

28
Single folio
Mid-9th century AD or later

Fragmentary (largest dimensions now 12×17 cm), with 5 lines to the page
Material Parchment; the recto is the hair side
Text area 8×15 cm
Script Style D.III
Accession no. KFQ10

This folio contains verses 66–69 of *Sūrat al-nisā'* (IV). The text was written in dark brown ink without diacriticals, but some strokes have been added in green; *shaddah*, in its modern form, is also an addition. Red dots indicate the vocalization; the green dot, perhaps a later addition, may indicate both *hamzah* and the accompanying vowel. The verses are punctuated by a 2.2.3B device, except at the end of a group of five verses, which is indicated by a letter *hā'* in gold Kufic. The sides of the folio are so damaged that there is virtually no margin left.



29 verso

29
Single folio
Mid-9th century AD or later

14.6 × 23 cm, with
5 lines to the page
Material Parchment; the verso
is the hair side
Text area 6.9 × 14.8 cm
Script Style D.III
Accession no. KFQ8

This folio contains *Sūrat Fāṭir* (XXXV), verses 22–25. The text is written in dark brown ink, with some diacritical strokes. Red dots indicate the vocalization, and a gold 3.1.2 device marks the end of every verse. The outer margin has been damaged, and the parchment has absorbed ink from the adjoining folios.



*30 recto

30
Single folio
Mid-9th century AD or later

Fragmentary (largest dimensions now 14 × 20.5 cm), with 5 lines to the page
Material Parchment; the verso is the hair side
Text area 10.3 × 20.5 cm
Script Style D.III
Accession no. KFQ12

The text of this fragment is *Sūrat Yūsuf* (XII), verses 88–89. The text is written in a dark brown ink which has eaten into the parchment at some points. The diacritical strokes are in the same colour. Red dots indicate the vocalization, and the end of every verse is marked by a pear-shaped device.



*31 recto

31
Single folio
Mid-9th century AD

Fragmentary (largest dimensions now 9.5 × 16 cm), with 8 lines to the page
Material Parchment; the recto is the hair side
Text area 6.4 × 12.5 cm
Script Related to style D.III
Accession no. KFQ31

The text is *Sūrat al-aḥzāb* (XXXIII), verses 64–69. It is written in brown ink. The diacritical dots have been added. Red dots indicate the vocalization. Individual verses are unpunctuated, but the end of every fifth verse is marked by a gold Kufic *hā'*. The lower part of the folio has been severely damaged.

32
Single folio
9th century AD

15.8 × 20.7 cm, with 15 lines to the page
Material Parchment; the verso is the hair side
Text area 10.5 × 16.5 cm
Script Related to style D.IV
Accession no. KFQ29

This folio contains *Sūrat al-baqarah* (II), verses 107–115. The text is written in brown ink, with the diacritical strokes, which are mainly additions, in black. Red dots indicate the vowels. The verses are divided by a 1.1.1 device of three oblique strokes, and a 2'.A.II illumination at verse 111 marks the end of a group of ten verses.

The last word of the preceding folio has been written in a later cursive hand in the upper margin of the recto, and the first word of the following folio in the lower margin of the verso; this may have been done during a restoration.

33
Single folio
Mid-9th century AD or later

Fragmentary (largest dimensions now 14.5 × 17.5 cm), with 5 lines to the page
Material Parchment; the hair side is not detectable
Text area 8.3 × 13 cm
Script Style D.III
Accession no. KFQ36

The text – verses 36–39 of *Sūrat yā' sīn* (XXXVI) – is written in dark brown ink. Red dots indicate the vocalization. A 3.1.2 device marks the end of every verse. The upper part of the folio and the inner margin are severely damaged.



32 verso



33 verso



34 folio 2b



34 folio 1b

34
Two folios
Mid-9th century AD or later

11 × 15.5 cm, with
4 lines to the page
Material Parchment; the verso
is the hair side
Text area 5 × 11.8 cm
Script Close to style D.III
Accession no. KFQ37
Another fragment from the same Qur'an
Istanbul, Topkapı Palace Library, MS.B.3
(Karatay 1962, no.47)

These two folios contain *Sūrat al-anfāl* (VIII), verses 1–2. The text is written in black ink, with diacritical strokes, also in ink. Red dots indicate the vocalization. The end of every verse is marked by a 2.2.3c device.

35
Two folios
Mid-9th century AD

Fragmentary; the largest dimensions
are 10 × 21 cm (folio 1) and
11.8 × 20.5 cm (folio 2), and there
were at least 9 lines to the page
Material Parchment; folios 1a and 2b
are the hair sides
Text area 7.4 × 14.9 cm
Script Related to style D.III
Accession no. KFQ43

The lower part of both folios has been damaged. The first folio begins at *Sūrat al-qalam* (LXVIII), verses 2, and breaks off at verse 17, with a lacuna between verses 8 and 12. The second begins at *Sūrat al-ḥāqqah* (LXIX), verse 50, and breaks off at *Sūrat al-ma'ārij* (LXX), verse 13. The text is written in brown ink, with some diacritical strokes in ink. Red dots mark the vocalization. The end of every verse is marked by a 3.1.1 device. A gold Kufic *hā'* marks the end of every fifth verse, and a 2'.A.II device, with the number of verses recorded in gold style D script, indicates the end of a group of ten verses. At the beginning of *Sūrat al-ma'ārij,* the title and the verse count have been written in gold style D script outlined with ink; a vignette extends into the margin (folio 2a).

The two folios are probably from the same quire but from different halves, as the recto is the hair side in the case of folio 1, and the verso is the flesh side in the case of folio 2.



*35 folio 1b



*35 folio 2a



36 verso



*37 folio 1b



38 recto

36
Single folio
9th century AD

14.6 × 20.8 cm, with 16 lines to the page
Material Parchment; the verso is the hair side
Text area 9.9 × 15.4 cm
Script Style D.IV
Accession no. KFQ22

The text, which is written in black ink, runs from *Sūrat al-aḥqāf* (XLVI), verse 29, to *Sūrat Muḥammad* (XLVII), verse 4. Red dots indicate the vowels. A green circle (I.A.I) marks the end of every verse. A 2'.A.II illumination indicates the end of a group of ten verses (XLVI, 31). The title and verse count of *Sūrat Muḥammad* are written in gold letters outlined in ink.

A later hand has added a frame in blue and gold, and in the margin there is an ornament of gilt flowers and leaves in Ottoman style. The folio must therefore have been part of an album or framed as a *levha* (see cat. 37).

37
Two folios
9th century AD

13 × 18 cm, with 15 lines to the page
Material Parchment; the verso is the hair side in both cases
Text area 10.6 × 17 cm
Script Style D.IV
Accession no. KFQ41

The text – *Sūrat al-naml* (XXVII), verses 52–64, and the second *Sūrat al-qaṣaṣ* (XXVIII), verses 65–77 – is written in dark brown ink, with diacritical strokes, some of which are later additions. Red dots indicate the vocalization. Individual verses are punctuated by a cluster of three oblique strokes (I.I.I). The end of every fifth verse is marked by a gold Kufic *hā'*, while a group of ten verses is marked by a 2'.A.II device. The calligrapher sometimes used *mashq*, a common feature of D.IV manuscripts.

Folio 1 has been cut in two down the middle, and part of the outer side of folio 2 is missing. They have both been mounted in a paper frame (16.5 × 21.8 cm); at the same time, the text was given a frame in gold, red and green, which survives on folio 2. They must have been part of an album or used as a *levha*.

38
Single folio
9th century AD

Fragmentary (largest dimensions now 11 × 14.5 cm), with 9 lines to the page
Material Parchment; the recto is the hair side
Text area 7.3 × 12.5 cm,
Script Style D.IV
Accession no. KFQ6

This folio contains *Sūrat al-fatḥ* (XLVIII), verses 15–17. The text is written in black ink, with diacritical strokes also in ink. Red dots indicate the vocalization. The end of every verse is marked by a cluster of three strokes (I.I.I). At the end of each group of five verses, a gold Kufic *hā'* has been placed over this cluster. The outer margin and part of the lower margin have been damaged.

The script is close to D.IV, although the number of lines to the page is unusual for a manuscript in this style (see cat. 39).



39 folio 5b

39
Seven folios
9th century AD

14.7 × 21.7 cm, with 16 lines to the page
Material Parchment
Text area 10.8 × 17.2 cm
Script Style D.IV
Binding Modern
Accession no. QUR69

The script of this manuscript is not the most accomplished example of D.IV, but it retains its most characteristic letter forms. Many of these are common to group D as a whole, notably the flattened lower return of independent *alif* and the enlarged head and rather short lower return of final *nūn.* (The back of this letter is rounded, while the inner outline often seems to be 'broken' at the point where the head begins.) The use of *mashq* throughout is also a regular feature of D.IV, which, like B.II, is a rather small-scale script and appears mostly on manuscripts with 15 or 16 lines to the page. (Cat.38 is an exception.)

The text contained in this fragment is as follows: *Sūrat Muḥammad* (XLVII), verses 20–34 (folio 1); *Sūrat al-fatḥ* (XLVIII), verses 9–28 (folios 2–3); *Sūrat al-ḥujurāt* (XLIX), verses 7–16 (folio 4); *Sūrat al-dhāriyāt* (LI), verse 34, to *Sūrat al-ṭūr* (LII), verse 3 (folio 5); and *Sūrat al-Raḥmān* (LV), verse 34, to *Sūrat al-wāqi'ah* (LVI), verse 49 (folios 6–7). It is written in black ink, with the vowels marked by red dots. The diacritical strokes are contemporary with the text itself, but the dots are a later addition. The end of the verse is often indicated by three diagonal strokes (I.I.I). Every tenth verse is marked by a I.B.I illumination in red and green; on occasion more complex forms were used, as on folio 5a, at the end of LI, 40. The title and the verse count of surahs LI and LVI are given in red and green ink, the colours alternating from word to word (folios 5b and 7a).



40 recto

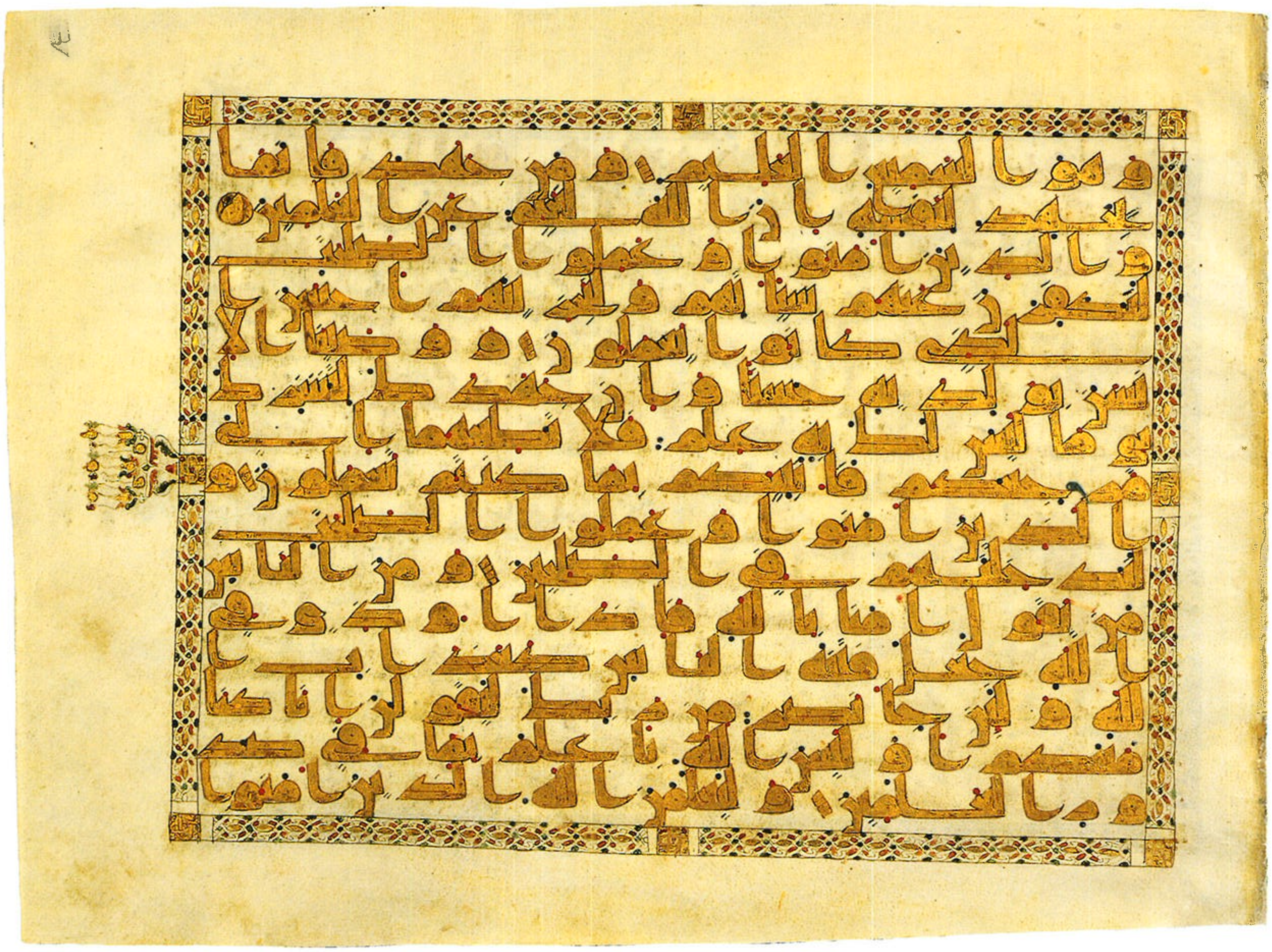
40
Single folio
9th century AD

13.5 × 21.2 cm, with
16 lines to the page
Material Parchment; the recto
is the hair side
Text area 9 × 16 cm
Script A form of style D.IV
influenced by B.II
Accession no. KFQ11

This script may be interpreted as a hybrid between D.IV and B.II on the basis of the presence in this fragment of letter forms typical of the two styles: the independent form of *alif* employed is clearly that of B.II, but final *nūn* and *mīm* and medial *hā'* seem closer to D.IV., for example. Both scripts are small in scale, but the occasional use of *mashq* also points to the influence of D.IV.

The text – verses 12–34 of *Sūrat al-zukhruf* (XLIII) – is written in black ink, without diacritical strokes. There is no vocalization. The end of every verse is marked by a I.I.4 device; in one instance, a red circle (I.A.I) was later placed over the device to indicate the end of a group of ten verses.

In one place (recto, line 3), an error in the text has been erased by scraping.



41 folio 3a

41
Five folios
9th century AD

27.5 × 36.8 cm with
15 lines to the page
Material Parchment
Text area 18.3 × 28 cm
Script Style D.IV
Documentation A notice of attribution
Accession no. KFQ52
Other fragments from the same Qur'an Istanbul, Nuruosmaniye Library, MS.27 (Lings 1976, nos 3 and 4; Ülker 1987, pp.105, 107); and Sotheby's, London, 11 October 1991, lot no.882 (one folio)

These folios once formed part of the same Qur'an as a manuscript in the Nuruosmaniye Library in Istanbul. This Qur'an was in two parts, of which the first seems to have been lost. The Nuruosmaniye manuscript contains most of the second half, starting with *Sūrat Maryam* (XIX), verse 1. A later note on folio 1a attributes it to 'Ali ibn Abi Talib. The five folios in the Khalili Collection contain *Sūrat al-qaṣaṣ* (XXVIII), verse 70, to *Sūrat al-'ankabūt* (XXIX), verse 40, and they would originally have been located between folios 66 and 67 of the Nuruosmaniye manuscript.

The text is written in gold and outlined in ink; the diacritical strokes are also in ink. Red dots indicate the vocalization. The end of every verse is marked by an oblique gold dash. Every fifth verse ends with a gold Kufic *hā'* within a circle, while every tenth verse ends with a letter giving the number of verses in the *abjad* system within a square surrounded by dots.

At the end of *Sūrat al-qaṣaṣ*, the total number of verses in this surah has been recorded in *abjad* within a square similar to those used for groups of ten verses. This is followed by a decorative band with floral motifs on a red ground and the title and verse count of *Sūrat al-'ankabūt* in gold. The last two letters of the verse count appear in a square at the end of the band.

Besides the chrysography, the main feature of the material in both the Khalili Collection

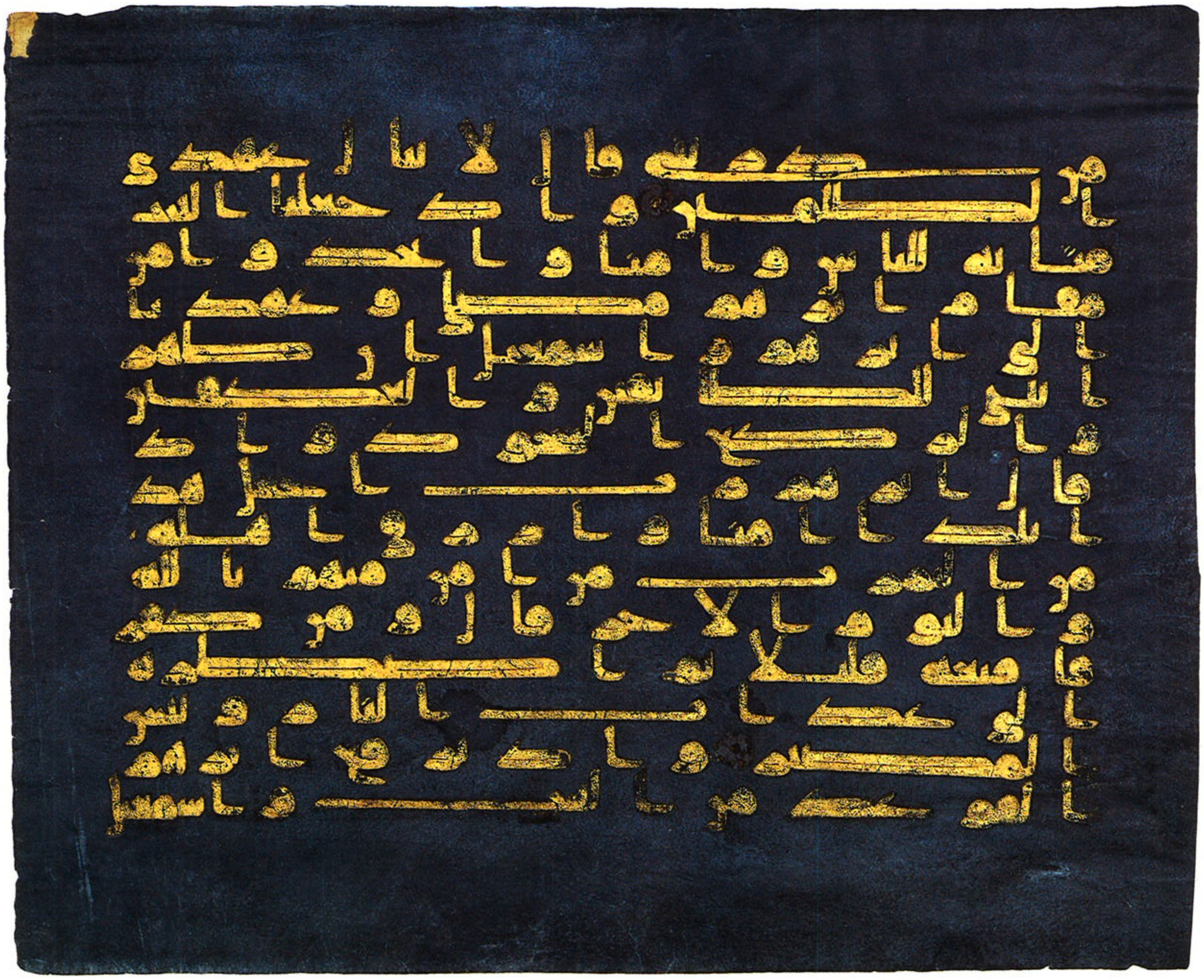


41 folio 4a

and the Nuruosmaniye Library is the frame that surrounds the text on every folio. This consists of a band roughly 0.8 cm wide filled with interlace patterns which rely for their effect on the opposition between the white fillets and coloured dots (gold, green and red). Each page has been conceived independently, and the patterns vary greatly, from simple rope designs to far more intricate ones. The band is interrupted at each corner and in the centre of each side by a small square which contains a cruciform interlace motif in gold on a red and green ground. A vignette extends into the margin from a point adjacent to the square in the middle of the outer side of the frame. The shape of the vignette is similar to that of the vase vignettes seen in cat. 17, but the vase has been replaced by winged elements, from which sprout gold pine cones and pomegranates.

In the material from this manuscript in the Nuruosmaniye Library, a catchword has been added in cursive script on the verso of every folio, probably during the restoration of the volume in the Ottoman period. These catchwords do not occur on the folios in the Khalili Collection, which suggests that they were detached from the main body of the manuscript some time before the restoration.

The parchment used in this manuscript was prepared so carefully that it is difficult, if not impossible, to distinguish the hair side from the flesh side. This enhances the effect of every double page, for the usual striking difference in the appearance of the two sides is entirely missing here. The care taken in assembling this manuscript is also shown by the make-up of the quires. Most early Qur'ans on parchment have quires of ten folios made up of a mixture of bifolios and single folios, but in this case they all seem to have contained eight folios in the form of four bifolios: one of the five folios in the Khalili Collection is in fact part of a bifolio that has been cut in two. These observations appear to confirm the impression that the Qur'an from which these leaves came was a manuscript of the highest quality which was produced at great expense to the patron.



42 folio 1b

42
Two folios
9th century AD

28.3 × 37.7 cm with 15 lines to the page
Material Parchment, dyed blue
Text area 18.9 × 29.3 cm
Script Style D.IV
Accession no. KFQ53
Other fragments from the same Qur'an
A section is in the National Institute of Art and Archaeology in Tunis (Lings & Safadi 1976, no. 11; Paris 1982, no. 350). At least 75 folios were kept in Kairouan in the 1950s (Shabbuh 1956, p. 345 and pl. 3; al-Buhli al-Niyal 1963, no. 1). Scattered folios are in Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, MS. 33.686; Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Art Museums, MS. 1967.23 (Welch 1979, no. 4); Dublin, Chester Beatty Library, MS. 1405 (Arberry 1967, no. 4; James 1980, no. 9); Geneva, collection of Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan (Welch & Welch 1982, pp. 20–22), and two private collections (Geneva 1984, no. 1; Geneva 1985, no. 3); London, private collection (see Bloom 1989, p. 99); Paris, Institut du Monde Arabe; Riyadh, collection of Rifaat Shaykh al-Ard (Geneva 1988, no. 4); Tunis, National Library, MS. Rutbi 197 (London 1976, no. 498). Others were sold at Sotheby's, London, on 16 April 1984 (lot no. 147), 15 October 1984 (lot no. 220), 22 May 1986 (lot no. 243) and 20 November 1986 (lot no. 279), and at Sotheby's, Geneva, on 25 June 1985 (lot no. 11). A folio owned by F.R. Martin was seen by Grohmann (1967, p. 111)

These folios came from a manuscript commonly known as the Blue Qur'an, which has been discussed in some detail by Jonathan M. Bloom (1986, pp. 59–64; 1989, pp. 95–9).

The first folio contains *Sūrat al-baqarah* (II), verses 120–27, and the second, *Sūrat āl 'Imrān* (III), verse 55–64. The text is written in gold, with some diacritical strokes, also in gold. There is no vocalization. As in other manuscripts of the period, the use of diacriticals is not consistent: it seems pointless to punctuate *nūn* at the end of a word, for example, as its form makes it unmistakable. The circular devices that marked the end of every verse are now indecipherable, but they may have been types 3.1.1 or 3.1.2. A gold Kufic *hā'* indicates

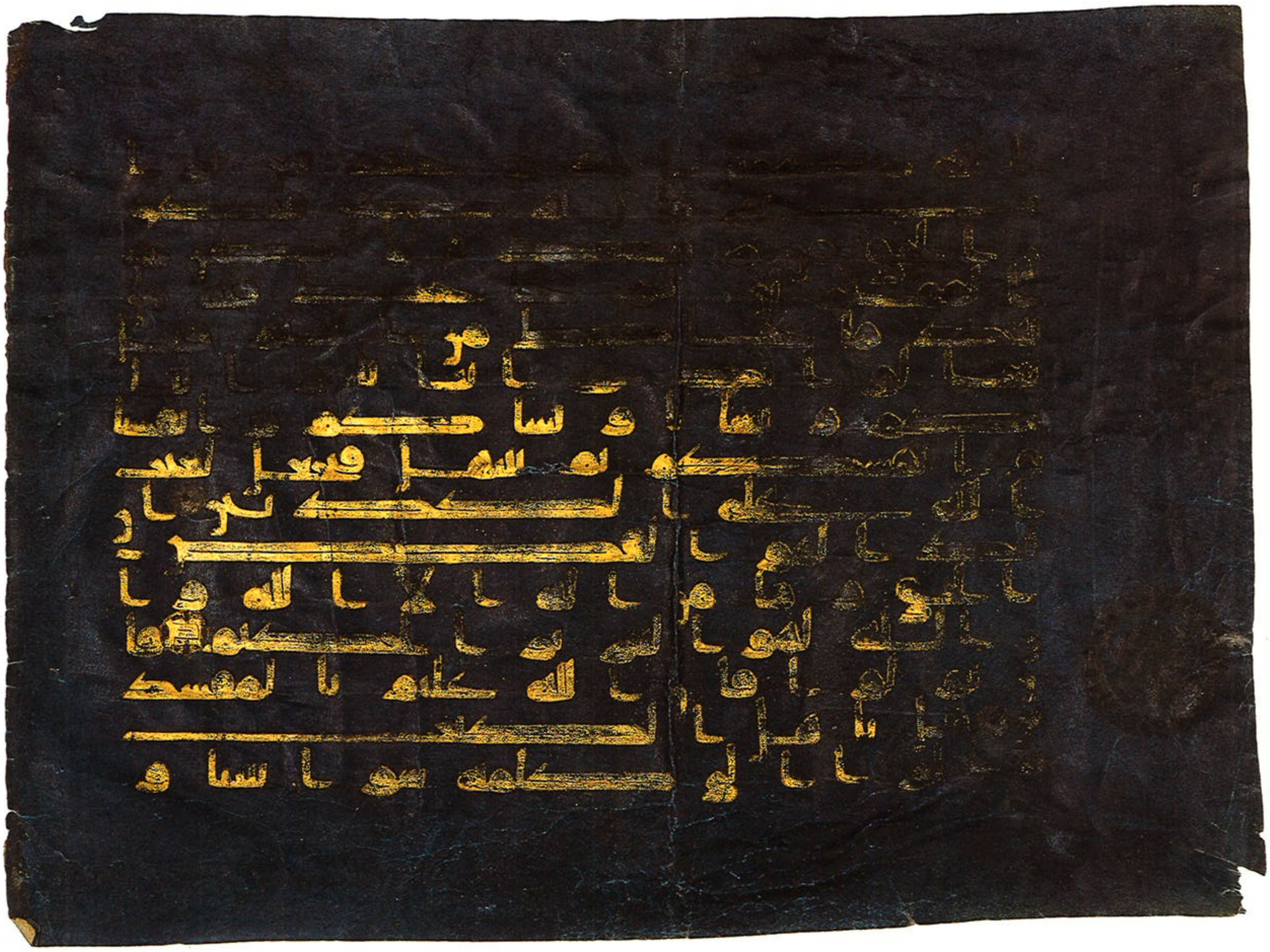


42 folio 1a

the end of every group of five verses, while the end of a group of ten verses is marked in the text by a letter which gives the number of verses in the *abjad* system and in the margin by a larger silver device. The *abjad* letter is no longer legible (verso of the second folio, line 12, after the end of III, 62), and the marginal device, perhaps an example of 3.C.I, is very faint.

Unlike most early Qur'an manuscripts, the Blue Qur'an still bears traces of ruling made with a dry point on every folio . Its presence may be connected with the extensive use of *mashq*. The calligrapher seems to have been very fond of starting a line with an isolated letter or a group of two: this is particularly noticeable on the verso of the first folio, where he succeeded in creating a 'column' of letters.

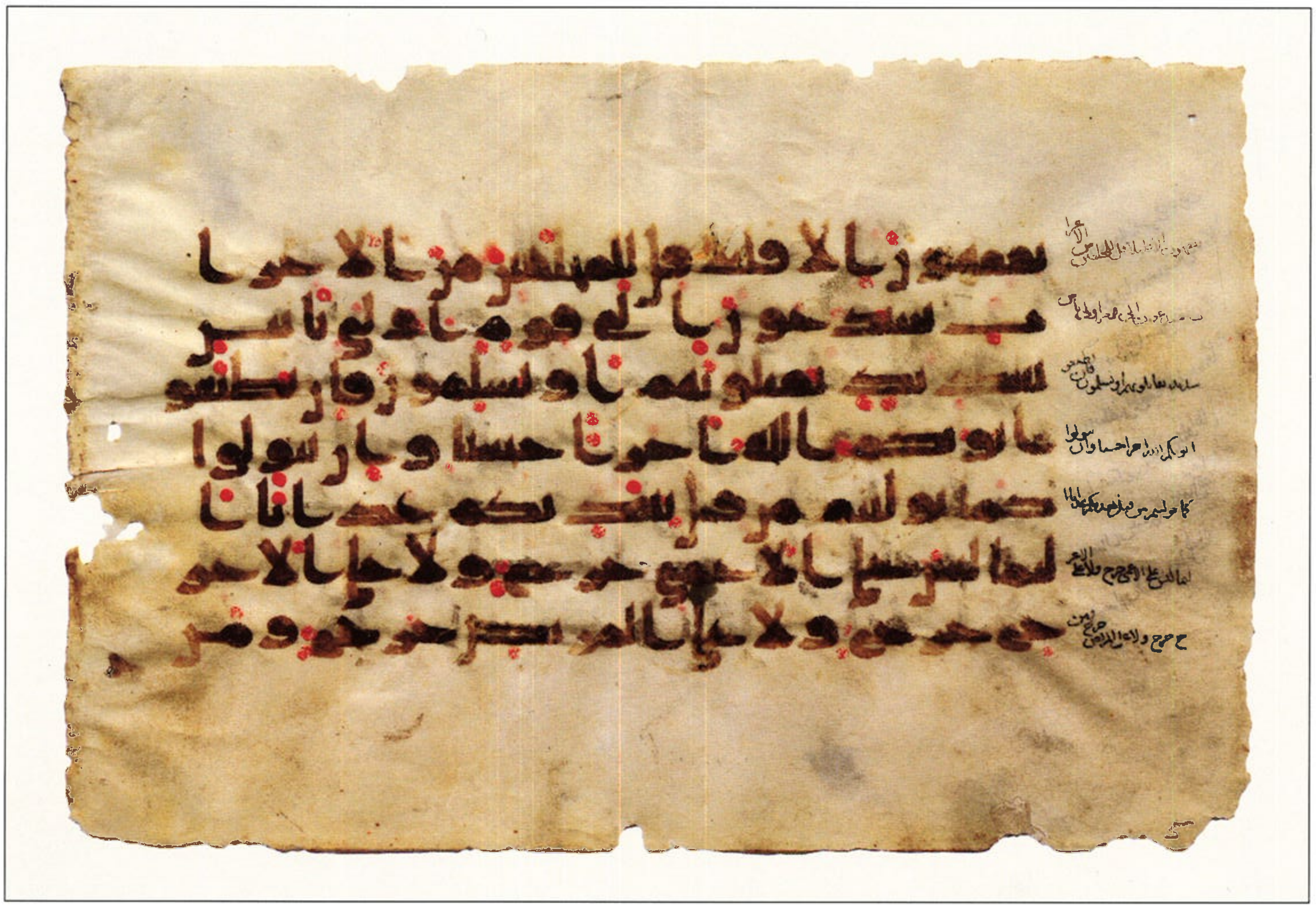
This manuscript was produced at great expense, as is evident from the use of chrysography and the dyeing of the parchment. Several other examples of dyed parchment are known, but yellow or saffron are the colours normally employed (see cat.11). Indeed, blue was such an unusual choice – and would have been as unusual for paper as for parchment – that F.R.Martin was led to suggest that the manuscript was commissioned by the caliph al-Ma'mun for the tomb of his father, Harun al-Rashid, in which case it would have been deposited in Mashhad (Arnold & Grohmann 1929, p.20; Grohmann 1967, p. 111). Following Shabbuh (1956, no.1, and pl.3), Bloom suggested that the Blue Qur'an had been part of the library of the Great Mosque of Kairouan, for the inventory of the library compiled in AH 693 (AD 1293) contains a description of a Qur'an written in gold on blue parchment, although with five lines to the page instead of fifteen. This does not settle the question of the manuscript's provenance, but Bloom supports a Tunisian origin (1986, p.63; 1989, p.97).



42 folio 2b



42 folio 2a



43 verso

43
Single folio
9th or 10th century AD

10.2×15.7 cm, with
7 lines to the page
Material Parchment; the verso is the hair side
Text area 5×11.2 cm
Script Related to style D.va
Accession no. KFQ25

The script of this fragment clearly belongs to the D group. In line 1 of the recto, final *kāf* has been written with its upper shaft bent to the right, and this enables us to define the hand as close to D.va. On the other hand, the head of final *nūn* has almost disappeared, and the shape of the letter sometimes verges towards that of D.vb. In some instances *alif* appears as a vertical stroke without a lower return (see verso, end of line 4).

This fragment's main point of interest lies in the transcription of the text in cursive script which has been added in the margin, an indication of the difficulty people found in reading manuscripts in the Early Abbasid scripts. The original text – verses 13–17 of *Sūrat al-fatḥ* (XLVIII) – is written in brown ink, without diacritical strokes. Red dots indicate the vocalization. The verses are not divided, but a gold Kufic *hā'* marks the end of every fifth verse.



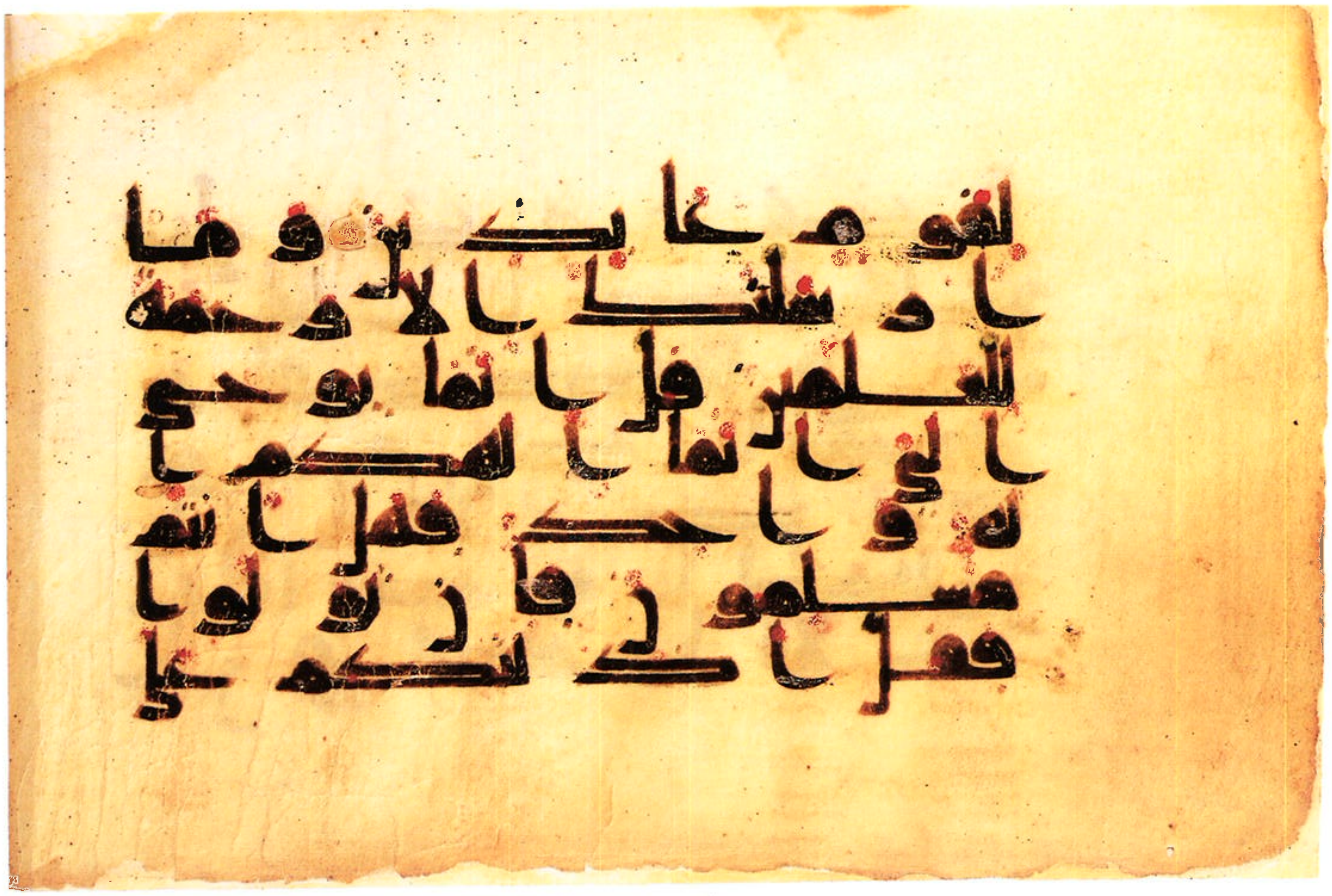
44 folio 4b

44
Two bifolios
End of the 9th century AD or first half of the 10th

11 × 18.4 cm, with
9 lines to the page
Material Parchment; the outside is the hair side
Text area 7.2 × 14 cm
Script Close to style D.va
Accession no. KFQ82

During the period that Islamic book production was undergoing rapid change as a result of the growing use of paper and the subsequent introduction of the New Style, calligraphers seem to have remained faithful to the Early Abbasid scripts for copying the Qur'an. However, these scripts were not left unaffected by the changes, and minute modifications in the complex D.va group – notably, a limited simplification of letter forms – mirror what was taking place elswhere. Here our sample is limited to four folios, and other clues, such as the bending of the shaft of *ṭā'/ẓā'* so typical of D.va (see cat.43), may have occurred on other pages of the manuscript.

The four folios contain *Sūrat al-infiṭār* (LXXXII), verse 8, to *Sūrat al-muṭaffifīn* (LXXXIII), verse 3 (folio 1); *Sūrat al-inshiqāq* (LXXXIV), verse 4, to *Sūrat al-burūj* (LXXXV), verse 5 (folios 2 and 3); and *Sūrat al-A'lā* (LXXXVII), verse 4, to *Sūrat al-ghāshiyah* (LXXXVIII), verse 1 (folio 4). The text is written in black ink, without diacritical strokes. Red dots indicate the vocalization. The verses are punctuated by 2.2.3a devices. A gold pear-shaped ornament marks the end of every fifth verse, while the end of a groups of ten verses is indicated by a 2.A.II illumination with the number of verses written out in gold script D. The same type of script, in gold outlined in black ink, was used for the three surah titles and verse counts (see folios 1b, 3b and 4b). These headings are complemented by fine marginal vignettes of different types.

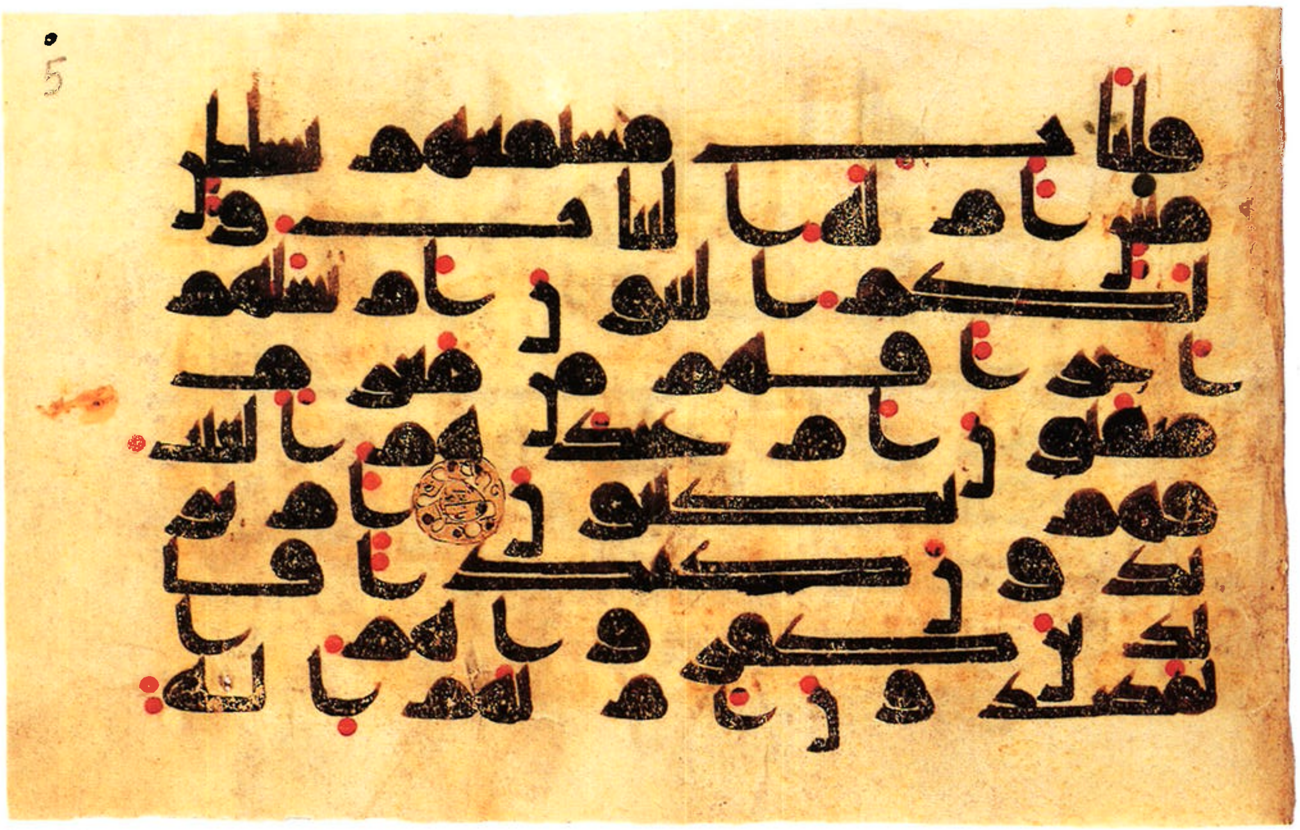


45 folio 18b

45
Qur'an fragment
End of the 9th century AD or first half of the 10th

19 folios, 12 × 18 cm, with 7 lines to the page
Material Parchment
Text area 5.7 × 12.5 cm
Script Style D.va
Binding Modern
Accession no. QUR49

The text of this fragment runs from *Sūrat al-anbiyā'* (X), verse 33, to *Sūrat al-ḥajj* (XXII), verse 1, and is written in black ink, with the vowels marked by red dots. Individual verses are not punctuated, but the end of every fifth verse is marked by a gold Kufic *hā'*, and at the end of every tenth verse there is a 2'.A.II device in gold, surrounded by red and green dots. The title and verse count of *Sūrat al-anbiyā'* are given on folio 19b, in gold lettering outlined in ink.



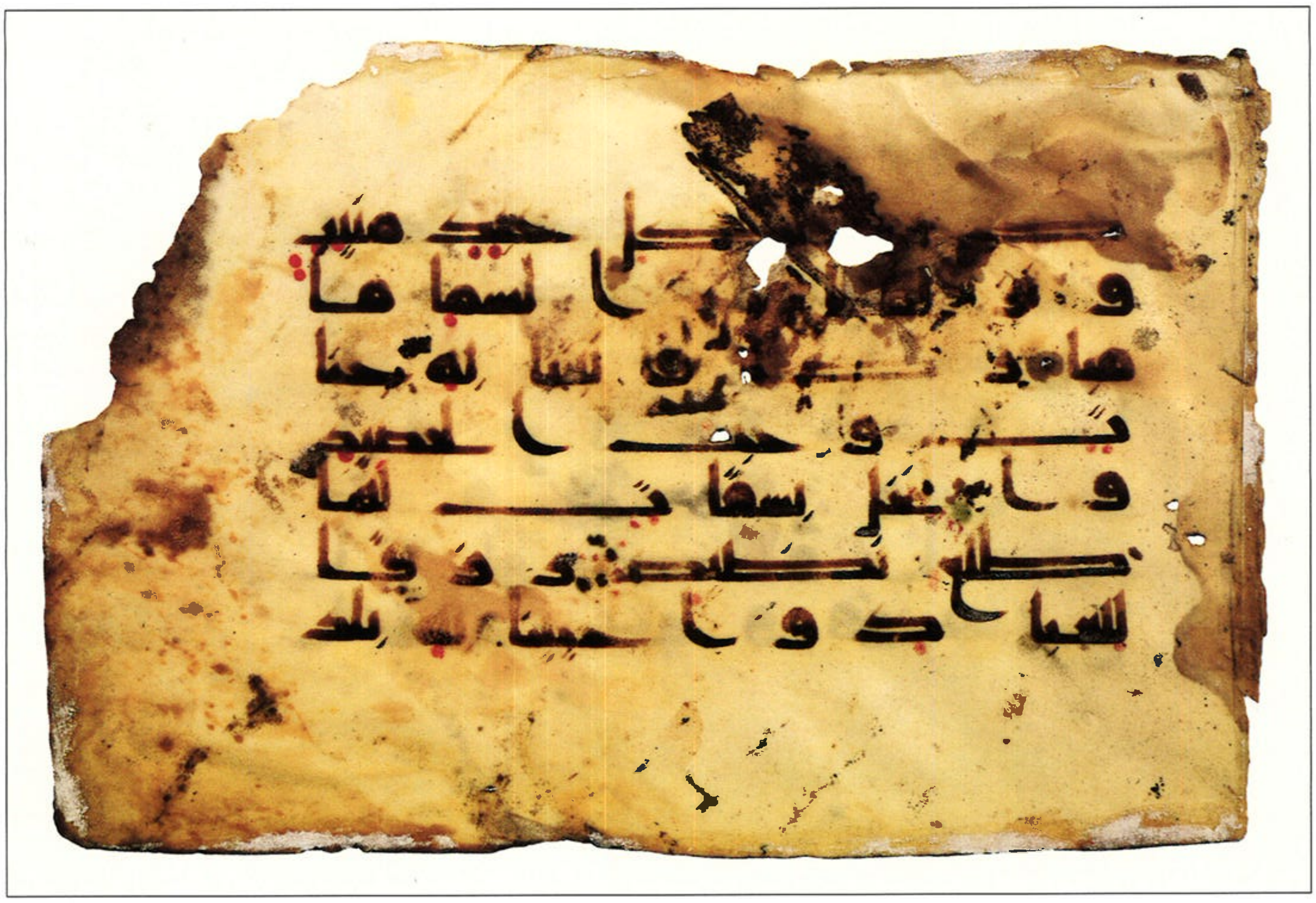
*46 folio 5a

46
Five folios
End of the 9th century AD or first half of the 10th

10.3 × 17 cm, with
9 lines to the page
Material Parchment
Text area 6.6 × 13.2 cm
Script Style D.va
Binding Modern
Accession no. QUR285

The text, which runs from *Sūrat al-dhāriyāt* (LI), verse 59, to *Sūrat al-ṭūr* (LII), verse 48, is written in black ink. The vocalization is indicated by red dots. Individual verses are not punctuated, but every fifth verse ends with a gold Kufic *hā'*, and there is a 2'.A.II device at the end of every tenth verse. The title and verse count of *Sūrat al-ṭūr* are written in gold and outlined in ink, and beside them in the margin there is a spearhead-shaped vignette.

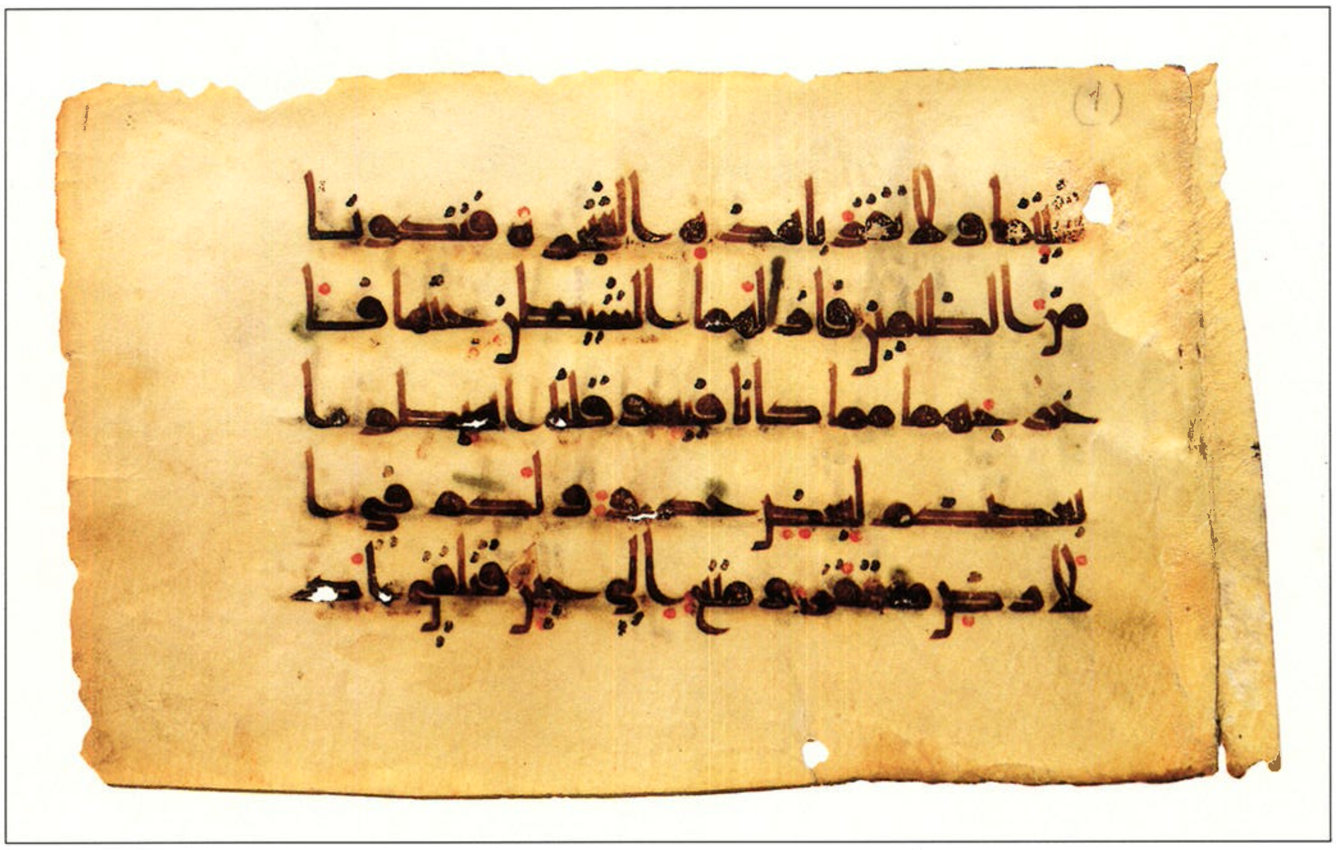
The script recalls that of cat. 44, and the format of the text area is a double square in both cases.



47 recto



*48 verso



*49 folio 1a

47
Single folio
End of the 9th century AD or first half of the 10th

12.2 × 18.5 cm, with 7 lines to the page
Material Parchment; the recto is the hair side
Text area 6.2 × 12.4 cm
Script Style D.va
Accession no. KFQ7

The text – verses 8–14 of *Sūrat qāf* (L) – is written in brown ink, with diacritical strokes. Red dots indicate the vocalization. Individual verses are not divided, but a device, perhaps of the I.B.I type, marks the end of a group of ten verses. The folio is stained, and the upper outer corner has been lost.

48
Single folio
End of the 9th century AD or first half of the 10th

10.6 × 17.1 cm, with 9 lines to the page
Material Parchment; the verso is the hair side
Text area 7.2 × 12.7 cm
Script Style D.va
Accession no. KFQ2

This folio contains *Sūrat al-ʿalaq* (XCVI), verses 1–19. The text is written in dark brown ink, with numerous diacritical strokes. Red dots indicate the vocalization. The verses are punctuated by 3.1.1 devices. A gold Kufic *hā'* marks the end of every fifth verse, and a 4.A.1 ornament with the number of verses written out in gold script D on a red ground indicates the end of a group of ten verses. A frame of gold, green and blue fillets has been added.

49
Two folios
End of the 9th century AD or first half of the 10th

9.5 × 16 cm (folio 1) and 9.3 × 16 cm (folio 2), with 5 lines to the page
Material Parchment; the outside is the hair side.
Text area 4.8 × 10.4 cm
Script Style D.va, with features of D.vb
Accession no. KFQ38

In this form of D.va, the vertical strokes have begun to take on a more prominent role. The same feature may be observed in style D.vb (see cat. 57, for example), and its occurrence here may be a first stage in the evolution of this second variant of D.v.

The text is *Sūrat al-baqarah* (II), verses 35–39 and 55–58. It is written in dark brown ink, with diacritical dots added in black ink. Red dots indicate the vocalization. Individual verses are not punctuated, but a gold *hā'* marks the end of a group of five verses (folio 1, recto, line 5).

These two folios once formed part of the same quire. The narrow selvedge on their inner sides suggests that they were used as a substitute for a bifolio in assembling the quire.



50 folio 1b



50 folio 2b

50
Two folios
End of the 9th century AD or first half of the 10th

12.2×18.3 cm (folio 1) and 12×19 cm, (folio 2), with 7 lines to the page
Material Parchment
Text area 5.7×12.3 cm
Script Perhaps style D.va
Accession no. KFQ21

The text on these two folios, *Sūrat al-anbiyā'* (XXI), verses 6–16, runs consecutively, and the two folios must have been part of the first half of a quire, as the recto is the hair side in both cases. The text is written in black ink, with diacritical strokes; some of these are later additions, probably made when a later hand wrote over the letters. Red dots indicate the vocalization. The verses are not punctuated. A gold Kufic *hā'* marks the end of every fifth verse, while the end of every tenth verse is marked by an ornament, now damaged, which may have been of type 2.A.II.

51
Two folios
End of the 9th century AD or first half of the 10th

18.4×13.7 cm (folio 1) and 18.5×14 cm (folio 2), with 10 lines to the page (11 on folio 2b)
Material Parchment; the verso is the hair side
Text area 12.5×9.8 cm
Script Related to style D.V.A
Accession no. KFQ18

Like cat. 44, these folios show how the evolution of Islamic book production influenced the way that Qur'ans were made. In this case, it is the format of the material that shows the impact of the changes. Only a limited number of Qur'ans in the Early Abbasid scripts were produced in the vertical format, and it appears that style D.va was frequently associated with this format. These comments must remain largely hypothetical, however, until a larger sample of early Qur'an material has been published.

The text – *Sūrat al-nūr* (XXIV), verse 23–27, and *Sūrat al-qaṣaṣ* (XXVIII), verse 6–10 – is written in black ink, with diacritical strokes which were mostly added in ink or in colour. Red dots indicate the vocalization. The verses are not punctuated, but a gold Kufic *hā'* marks the end of every fifth verse.



51 folio 1b



51 folio 2b



52 verso

52
Single folio
End of the 9th century AD or first half of the 10th

12.1 × 18 cm, with
14 lines to the page
Material Parchment; the verso
is the hair side
Text area 8 × 15.2 cm
Script Style D.Va
Accession no. KFQ17

This folio contains *Sūrat al-naml* (XXVII), verses 25–40. The text is written in black ink, with diacritical strokes added in green. Red dots indicate the vocalization. A gold Kufic *hā'* marks the end of every fifth verse. The remains of gold ornament, perhaps a 4.A.II device, can be seen in the outer margin of the recto, adjacent to line 1. It is not connected with a division of the text and may relate to an illumination on the preceding folio.

The folio has been slightly damaged in the lower outer corner.



53 verso



54 recto



55 verso

53
Single folio
9th or 10th century AD

12×18 cm, with
7 lines to the page
Material Parchment; the verso is the hair side
Text area 6.8×13.5 cm
Script A variant of group D
Accession no. KFQ39A

The text – verses 16–20 of *Sūrat Luqmān* (XXXI) – is written in dark brown ink, with diacritical strokes added. Red dots indicate the vocalization. The verses are not punctuated. The upper outer corner has been damaged.

54
Single folio
9th or 10th century AD

12×18 cm, with
7 lines to the page
Material Parchment; the verso is the hair side
Text area 6×12.5 cm
Script A variant of group D
Accession no. KFQ39B

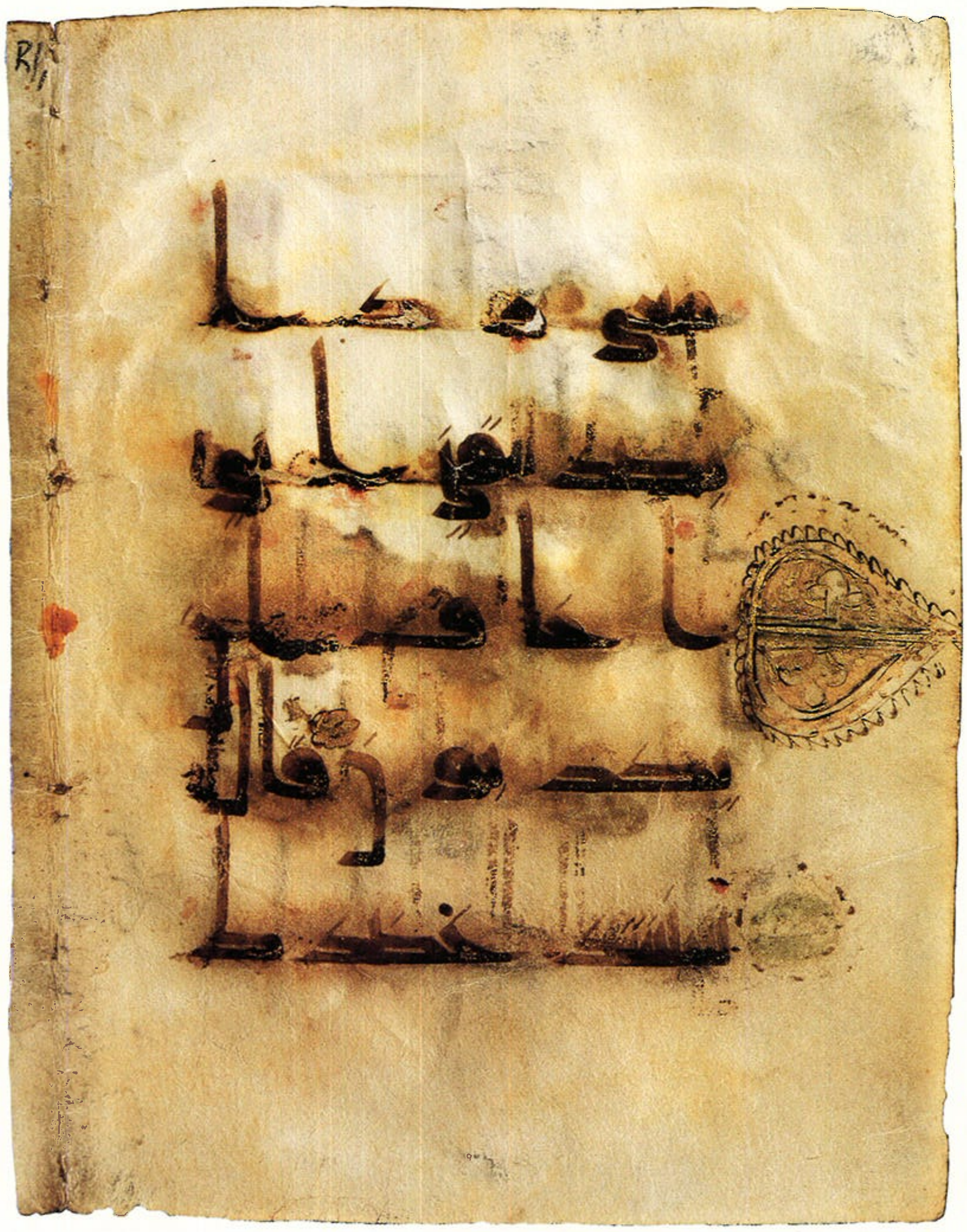
This folio contains *Sūrat al-dhāriyāt* (LI), verses 7–16. The text is written in dark brown ink, with diacritical strokes added in ink or in colour. Red dots indicate the vocalization. The verses are not divided. The folio has been stained, and there is a hole in its upper part.

55
Single folio
9th or 10th century AD

9.2×15.2 cm, with
11 lines to the page
Material Parchment; the verso is the hair side
Text area 7×14.2 cm
Script A variant of group D
Accession no. KFQ69

This script of this folio, which is related to style D.V, is particularly interesting because of the unusual way that the vertical shafts have been extended. In D styles such as D.VC (see cat. 58) and D.VB (see cat. 57), what could be dubbed 'vertical *mashq*' is applied consistently, but in cat. 55 it is only the upper strokes of the first line that are extended in this way: final *nūn* in the same line was left untouched.

The text consists of *Sūrat al-baqarah* (II), verses 197–204, and is written in brown ink, with diacritical strokes. Red dots indicate the vocalization. Individual verses are not punctuated, but a red and green circle indicates the end of a group of ten verses.



*56 folio 1b

56
Six folios
First half of the 10th century AD

17.4×13.5cm, with
5 lines to the page
Material Parchment; the verso is the hair side in all six cases
Text area 9×7.7cm
Script Style D.vb
Accession no. KFQ51

As is often the case, style D.vb is associated here with the vertical format. This slender script retains the basic letter forms of group D, but the play on the varying thickness of the line, which is such a strong feature of the D.I manuscripts, has been deliberately abandoned: final *nūn* provides a particularly good illustration of this. *Mashq* was not used, perhaps because of the vertical elongation of the letters, and the upper strokes of *ṭā'*, *ẓā'* and final *kāf* sometimes slant to the right before turning to the left. This can be seen on folio 5, verso, line 2, but its occurrence there may be explained by the lack of space. In a related example, cat.61, whose script is somewhat coarser, this practice was used regularly (see lines 2 and 4 of the verso). These elements, together with the format, suggest that the influence of NS.I was quite strong, and it is probable that the two scripts were in use at the same time.

The illumination of D.vb manuscripts, and, more particularly, the frequent use of ornaments 4.A.I and 4.A.II to separate groups of five verses, which can be seen, for example, in cat.60 and 89, Istanbul, Topkapı Palace Library, MS.EH34 (Karatay 1962, no.51), and Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MSS arab.368 and 373d (Déroche 1983, nos 174 and 176), suggests that there was, if not a proper school or scriptorium, at least a strong tradition among the calligraphers who used D.vb.

These six folios formed part of three different quires. The text they contain – *Sūrat al-qaṣaṣ* (XXVIII), verses 33–35 (folio 1), 72–77 (folios 2–5) and 79–80 (folio 6) – is written in dark brown ink. Red dots indicate the vocalization. The verses are punctuated by a 3.1.1 or 3.1.2 marker. Groups of five verses are marked by a 4.A.II illumination with the word *khams* ('five') written in gold on a green ground. A vignette in the margin of folio 1a indicates a subdivision of the text, while a short note on folio 6 recto shows that the manuscript was an endowment.

57
Bifolio
First half of the 10th century AD

14.4×10.8cm, with
5 lines to the page
Material Parchment; the hair side is the recto of the first folio and the verso of the second folio
Text area 8×7.2cm
Script Style D.vb
Accession no. KFQ89
Published Sotheby's, London, 26 April 1990, lot no.137

On this bifolio , D.vb script can be seen at its best. The tendencies noted in cat.56 result here in a strong contrast between the area of the base line, where the body of short letters such as *jīm*, *dāl*, *rā'* and *mīm* were written, and the slender shafts that extend above and below. This led the calligrapher to replace the sickle-shaped tail of indepedent *'ayn* with a form that curls in on itself, for example. As in cat.56, the upper stroke of *ṭā'*, *ẓā'* and final *kāf* slants to the right before turning to the left. In the case of *alif* and *lām*, the top of the shaft bulges slightly while moving to the left; this is particularly clear in the word *Allāh* (folio 1b, line 2; folio 2a, line 5). The illumination is on the same lines as in cat.56.

The text – *Sūrat al-aḥzāb* (XXXIII), verses 44–48 and 50–51 – is written in black ink. The diacritical strokes are contemporary with the manuscript, while the dots were added later. Red dots indicate the vocalization. *Hamzah* (green) and *shaddah* (blue) have the same shape as they do today. Verses are punctuated by a 3.1.2 device. Every fifth verse is marked by a 4.A.I device which has the word *khams* ('five') written in gold on a red ground. A group of ten verses is indicated by a small 3.A.II ornament, which is complemented by a larger 3.C.II device in the margin. This has the number of verses (*khamsūn*, 'fifty') written in gold script D on a red ground.

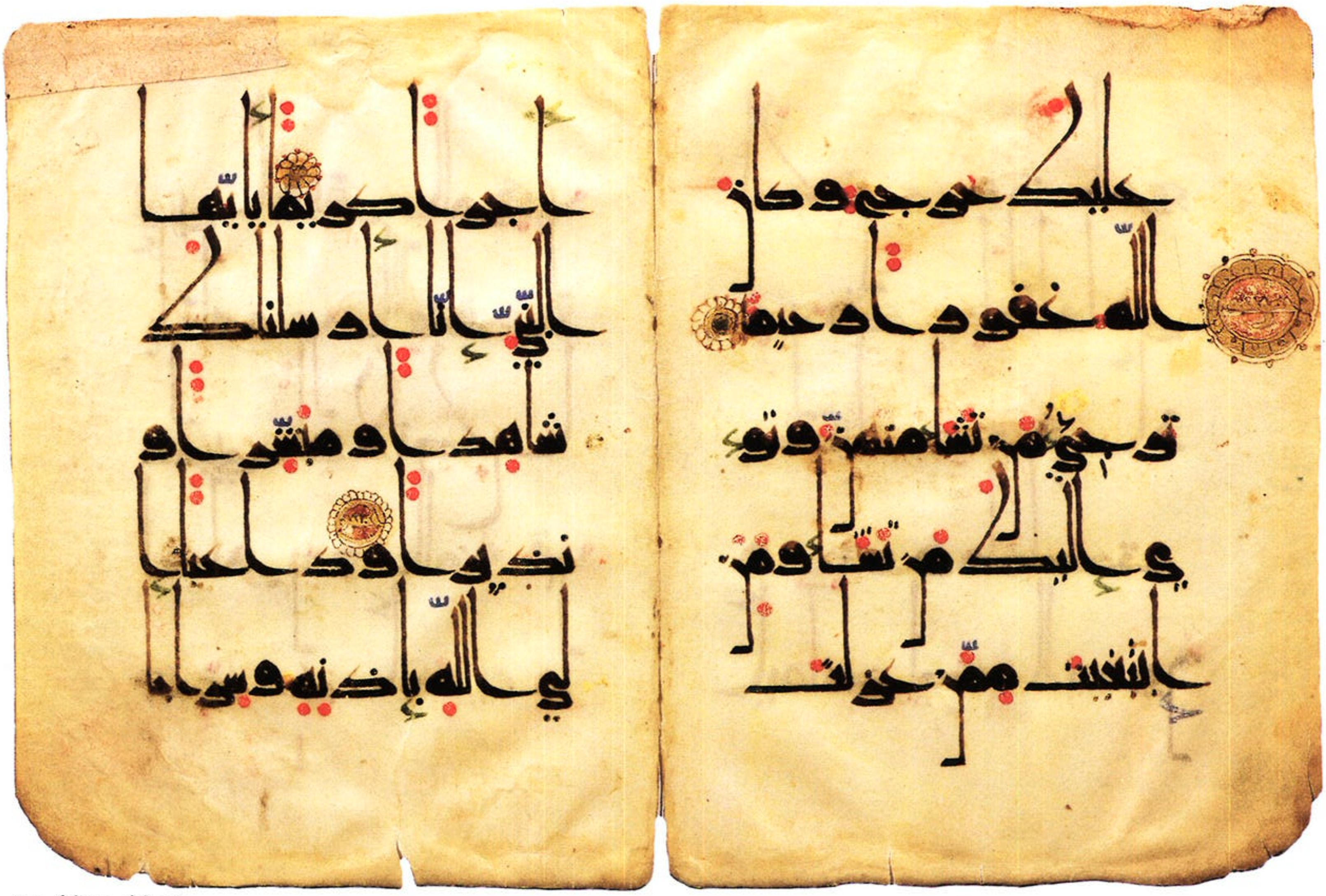
58
Single folio
10th century AD

20.4×30.5cm, with 3 lines to the page
Material Parchment
Text area 10.5×23cm
Script Style D.vc
Accession no. KFQ91
Other fragments from the same Qur'an Sotheby's, London, 25 June 1985, lot no.6; 21–2 November 1985, lot no.292; 22–3 May 1986, lot nos 246–7; 20 November 1986, lot no.275–6; 11 October 1991, lot no.887. See also Fehérvári & Safadi 1981, nos 9a and 9b

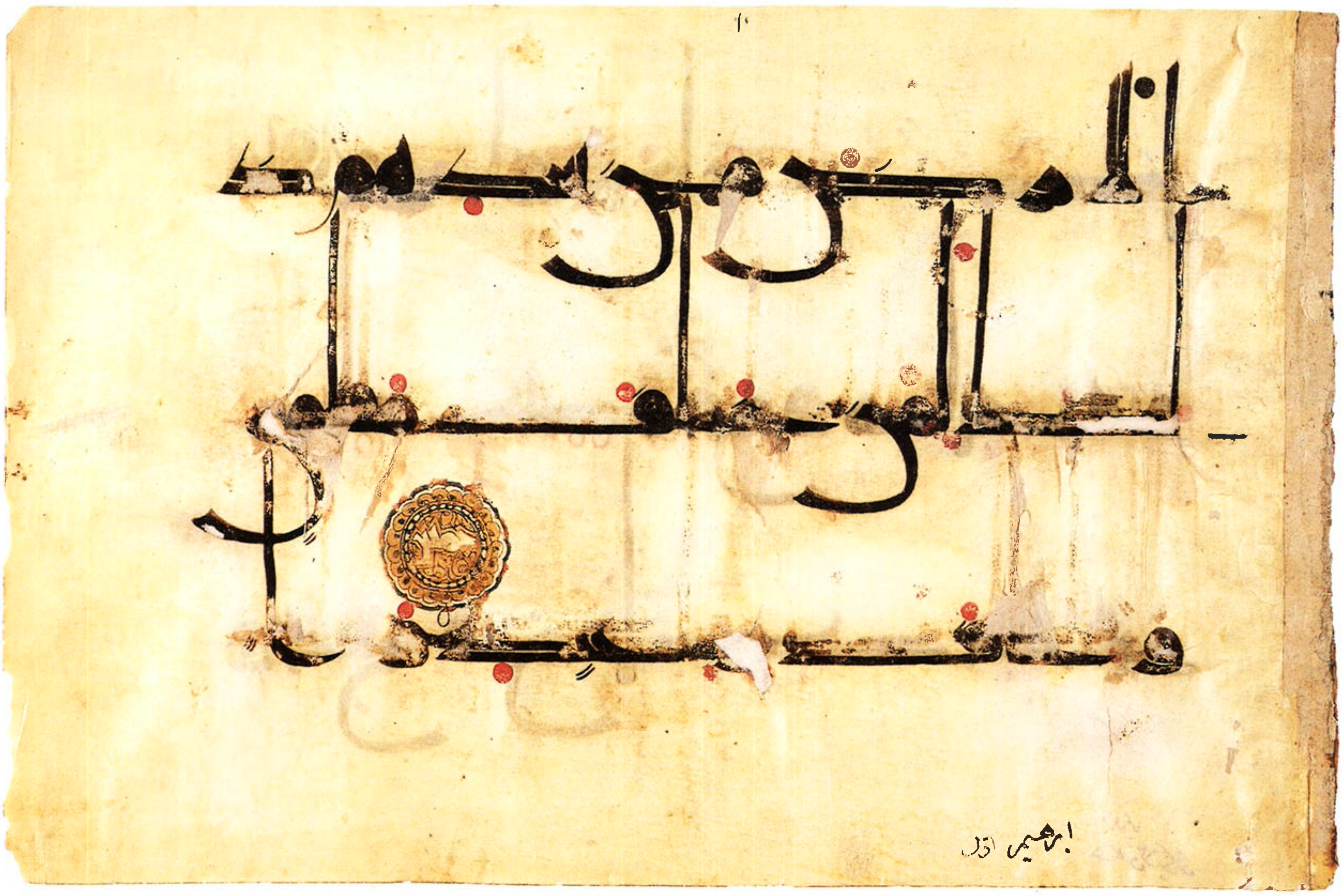
D.VC has been called the 'script of the Damascus school' (Michele Amari, *apud* de Slane 1883–95, p.94) and 'Western Kufic' (Lings & Safadi 1976, p.29–30) for no very good reasons. As with D.vb, vertical elongation above the base line plays a major role in the aesthetic of the script, but the forms of letters that extend below the line have changed completely: the vertical body and lower return of final *nūn* (line 1) and similar forms (lines 1 and 2) have been replaced by a crescent shape, while final *mīm* (line 1) now has a thin tail that curves inwards as it descends below the line.

This manuscript is among the very few early Qur'ans written with three lines to the page. The most famous example is the Qur'an of Amajur, which was donated to the Great Mosque of Tyre in AH 262 (AD 876). These manuscripts were evidently very expensive, since considerably more parchment – and time – was needed for their manufacture.

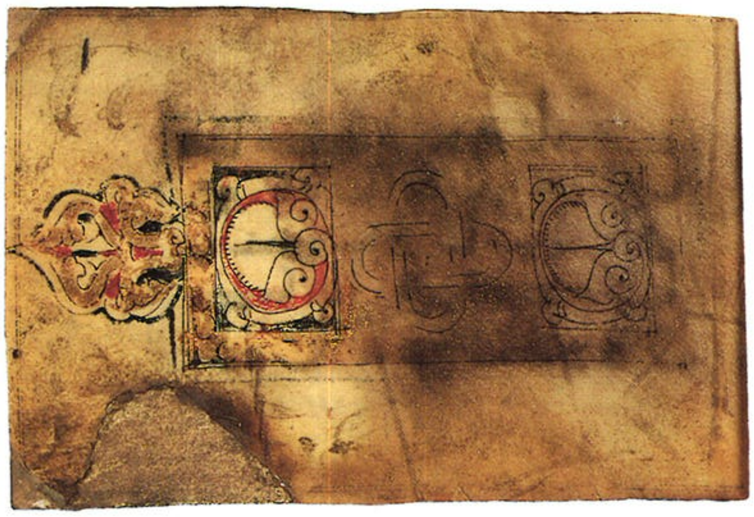
The text – verses 14–17 of *Sūrat Ibrāhīm* (XIV) – is written in dark brown ink, with diacritical strokes. Red dots indicate the vocalization. Individual verses are marked by gold 2.2.4 devices, and a 3.C.I ornament, with the word *khams* ('five') reserved on a gold ground, marks the end of a sequence of five verses.



*57 folio 1a, folio 2b



58 recto



*59 folio 1a

59
Part 20 of a 30-part Qur'an 10th century AD

69 folios, 6.2×9.3cm, with 5 lines to the page
Material Parchment
Text area 2.7×6cm
Script Close to style D.vc
Binding Probably 16th century
Accession no. QUR306

The script is related to D.vc, but some letter forms appear in more than one guise: independent *alif*, for example, either has the form characteristic of group D, with its crescent-shaped lower hook, or that of group E, a simple vertical stroke. The same holds true for *nūn*, whose shape varies so much that it is difficult to define. The shape of final *mīm*, on the other hand, is fairly constant: with its straight vertical tail, it conforms to one of the two types usually found in D.vc manuscripts. (The alternative has a sinuous tail.) As one might expect in a style related to group D, the shafts of *kāf* and *ṭā'* are sometimes curved.

The surviving text consists of *Sūrat al-naml* (XXVII), verse 56, to *Sūrat al-qaṣaṣ* (XXVIII), verse 2 (folios 1–14); *Sūrat al-qaṣaṣ*, verses 4–32 (folios 15–28) and 36–81 (folios 29–49); and *Sūrat al-qaṣaṣ*, verse 84, to *Sūrat al-'ankabūt* (XXIX), verse 41 (folios 50–68). It is written in black ink. The diacriticals are a later addition. The vocalization is indicated by red dots. The verses are not punctuated, but the end of every tenth verse is marked by a 3.A.II device, with the number of verses written out in gold at its centre. The title and verse count of the surah are written in gold letters outlined in ink and are accompanied in the margin by a vignette.

Restoration has altered the appearance of the manuscript to some extent. A frame has been drawn around the text, and catchwords in a cursive hand have been added. The loss of some folios left the text incomplete, and the lacunae were filled by writing the missing parts of the text in the margins of the folios facing the lost leaves. Quires of eight folios seem to have been the rule, but it was not always possible to examine their composition because some seem to have been trimmed along the inner side when the binding was restored.

This section has an illuminated frontispiece and finispiece. Both of these were probably double-page compositions, but only one half of each survives. They share the same pattern. The field (folio 1a, 3×6cm; folio 69a, 3.1×6.4cm) is divided into three rectangles surrounded by a band of gold dots. The central compartment, which is slightly larger than the other two, contains a cruciform interlace motif made up of white fillets, the rest of the space being occupied by gold dots or leaf designs. In the two lateral compartments, a single arabesque element, white on a blue and red ground, is oriented towards the outer margin.

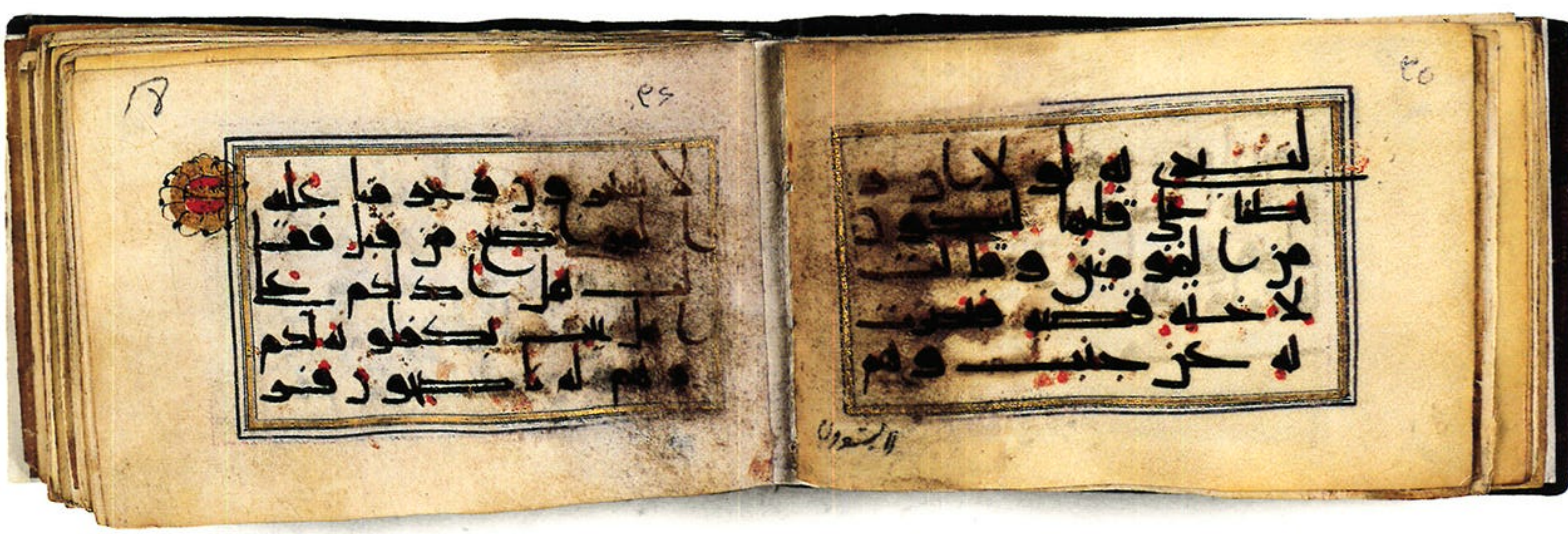
The later covers are of black leather. Gold fillets have been painted along the edges, and a central medallion has been stamped and gilded. The spine has been remade, and there is no flap. The doublures are of red leather and also have gold fillets painted along the edges. The central mandorla and its extensions are in filigree work on a blue ground.



*59 folios 14b–15a



*59 folios 45b–46a



*59 folios 17b–18a



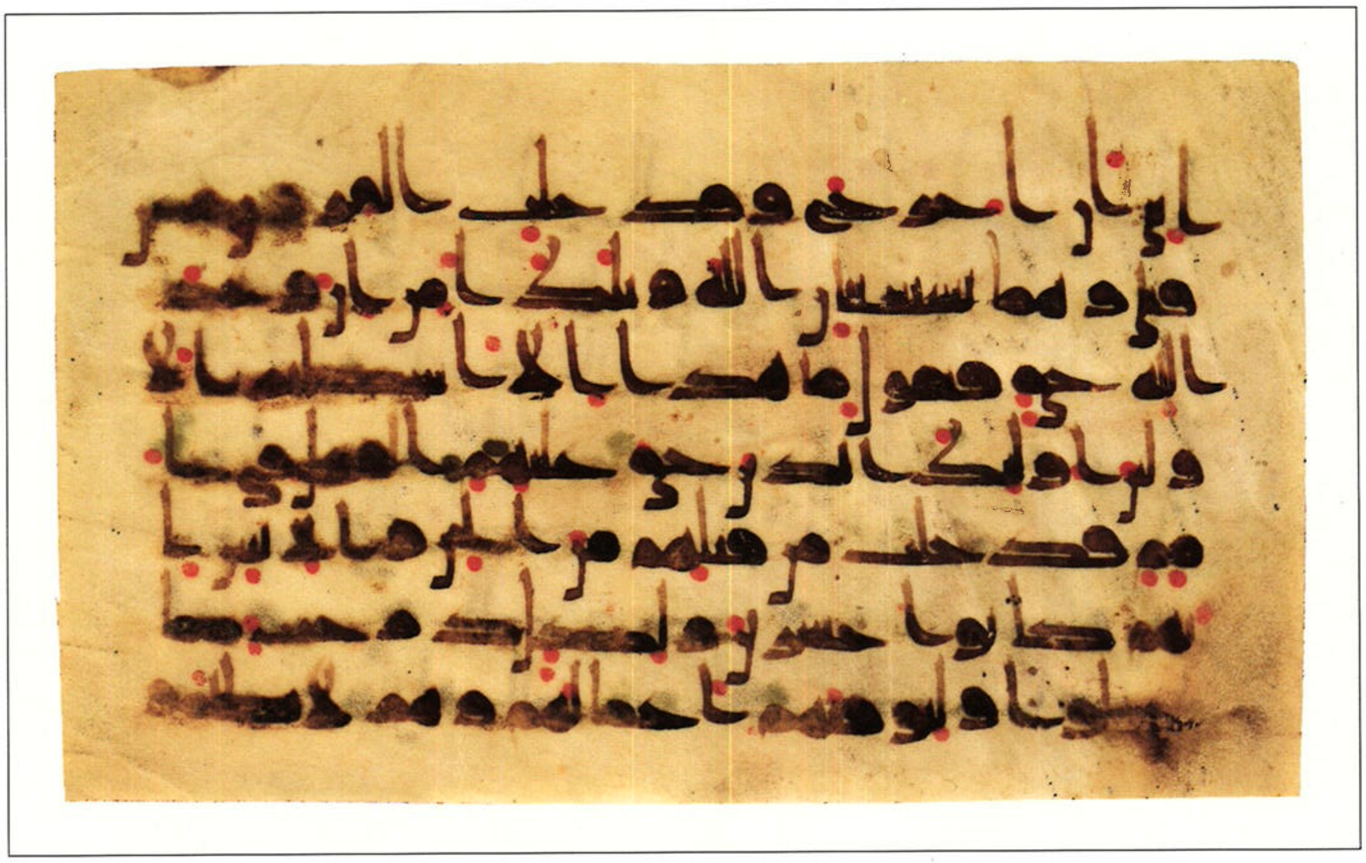
*60 verso

60
Single folio
First half of the 10th century AD

Fragmentary (largest dimensions now 10 × 9 cm); parts of only 4 lines survive on each page, but there may have been 5 lines
Material Parchment; the recto is the hair side
Text area An area 6 × 6.2 cm survives
Script Style D.vb
Accession no. KFQ4

The sequence of text on this fragment – *Sūrat al-fātiḥah* (I), verses 6–7, and *Sūrat al-kahf* (XVIII), verse 75 – shows that it was at the beginning of Part 16 of a a 30-volume Qur'an, which starts with verse 75 of *Sūrat al-kahf*. Unusually, the text of the Qur'an section (*juz'*) is prefaced by that of *Sūrat al-fātiḥah*, which was probably written at the beginning of each volume of the set. As this *juz'* does not start with a new surah, its beginning is marked by a special motif, an undulating stem from which long leaves grow.

The text is written in dark brown ink, with diacritical strokes. Red dots indicate the vocalization. There seems to have been a 3.1.2 device at the end of each verse, and a 4.A.II. ornament, with the word *khams* ('five') in gold script D on what was probably a blue ground, marks the end of a group of five verses. The illumination seems to use the same repertoire as cat. 56 and 57. A note has been written between the lines on the recto, but it is so badly damaged as to be illegible.



61 verso

61
Single folio
First half of the 10th century AD

8.7×14.6 cm, with
7 lines to the page
Material Parchment; the verso is the hair side
Text area 6×12.5 cm
Script Style D.vb, with some peculiarities
Accession no. KFQ24

The D.vb script of this folio, which is not as well executed as the other two examples in the Collection, shows some signs of further evolution, particularly in the form of final *nūn* and the upper stroke of final *kāf*, which slants to the right. The *mīm* sometimes ends with a downward stroke instead of the more usual horizontal tail. The format is rectangular rather than vertical, as it is in the other two examples.

The text is *Sūrat al-aḥqāf* (XLVI), verses 15–19. It is written in dark brown ink and appears never to have had any diacriticals. Red dots indicate the vocalization. Individual verses are not punctuated, and there do not seem to have been any markers for the groups of five and ten verses.



62 verso

62
Single folio
End of the 9th century AD or 10th

13.6×18 cm, with
15 lines to the page
Material Parchment; the verso is the hair side
Text area 7.5×13.3 cm
Script Style E, with *mashq*
Accession no. KFQ16

Two developments mark off group E scripts from their predecessors: the abandonment of the lower return in the independent form of *alif,* which assumed the form of a simple vertical stroke (see the beginning of line 4); and a change in the orientation of the tail of final *mīm,* which now pointed downwards. The shape of the tail varied, and here it is reduced to a short vertical stroke (verso, end of line 1). Other features of group E are its size – it is generally small, and cat.62 is a representative example in this respect – and the frequent use of *mashq.* In cat.62, as in cat.65, *mashq* was used in every line, but in other cases it was only used in the first, middle and last lines of a page.

It may be that style E answered a need for a script that was closer to normal writing practices, and it may be that Qur'ans copied in this style were most often made for personal use. To some extent, this style contaminated other scripts, such as B.II (Déroche 1989, p.103) and D (see cat.64, for example).

The text is *Sūrat al-zukhruf* (XLIII), verses 67–89. It is written in black ink. Red dots indicate the vocalization. Verses are not punctuated, but a gold Kufic *hā'* marks the end of every fifth verse, while a I.B.II device in gold, green and red plays the same role after every tenth verse. The omission of a word from verse 85 has been corrected.



63 verso

63
Single folio
End of the 9th century AD or 10th

12×17.5cm, with
19 lines to the page
Material Parchment; the recto is the hair side
Text area 8.5×14.5cm
Script Style E, with *mashq*
Accession no. KFQ30

This folio contains *Sūrat al-qaṣaṣ* (XXVIII), verses 7–32. The text is written in brown ink, seemingly without diacritical marks. Red dots indicate the vocalization. Verses are not punctuated, but a red circle (I.A.I) marks the end of every tenth verse. On the recto, red marks left by the surah title written on the preceding folio can be seen. The lower left-hand corner has been lost.



64 verso

64
Single folio
End of the 9th century AD or 10th

Fragmentary (largest dimensions now 12.8×17.5cm), with 14 lines to the page
Material Parchment; the verso is the hair side
Text area 8.1×15.1cm
Script A style related to group D but with elements drawn from group E
Accession no. KFQ5

The script of this leaf is not a true hybrid, because some letters retain the forms found in both style D and style E. It may be regarded as a type of D contaminated by a few forms found in style E (see cat.62).

The text is *Sūrat al-dhāriyāt* (LI), verses 23–57. It is written in black ink, with a few diacritical strokes. On the recto, most of the lettering has been redone. Red dots indicate the vocalization. A red and black circle (I.A.I) marks the end of every tenth verse.



*65 recto

65
Single folio
End of the 9th century AD or 10th

12 × 18 cm, with 18 lines to the page
Material Parchment; the recto is the hair side
Texta area 7.9 × 14 cm
Script Style E, with *mashq*
Accession no. KFQ3

It may be that small scripts, such as that of cat.65, were used for Qur'ans intended for personal use. This may also explain the use of damaged parchment: there are two holes in this leaf, probably from wounds to the animal.

The text of this folio runs from *Sūrat al-naml* (XXVII), verse 66, to *Sūrat al-qaṣaṣ* (XXVIII), verse 7. It is written in brown ink, and there seem to have been no diacritical marks. Occasional red dots indicate the vocalization. Verses are not divided. At the beginning of *Sūrat al-qaṣaṣ*, the title and verse count have been written in red.



66 (KFQ46) verso

66
Three folios
End of the 8th century AD

32×38.5cm (KFQ46) and 32.5×39.2cm (KFQ47, KFQ71), with 16 lines to the page
Material Parchment; the hair side is the verso in KFQ46 and KFQ47, and the recto in KFQ71
Text area 23.8×30.5cm (KFQ46), 24×32.5cm (KFQ47), 24×31.2cm (KFQ71)
Script Style F.I
Accession nos KFQ46, KFQ47, KFQ71

Other fragments from the same Qur'an
Geneva 1985, no.4; Pal 1973, no.141; Sotheby's, London, 15–16 April 1985, lot nos 40–44; 21–22 November 1985, lot nos 284–5; 20 November 1986, lot nos 255–6; 4 December 1987, lot nos 182–3; 11 October 1991, lot no.885; Christie's, London, 16 June 1987, lot no.72

Style F.I is also known from two manuscripts in Istanbul – Topkapı Palace Library, MS.Y744 (Karatay 1962, no.42; Bergsträsser & Pretzl 1936, pl.7), and an unpublished Qur'an in the Museum of Turkish & Islamic Arts. It is an independent script, although some of its letter forms may be compared with those of other styles. The independent form of *alif* resembles that seen in group D, for example, whereas final *nūn* is almost a semicircle and is very



66 (KFQ47) verso

different from the final *nūn* of D.VC. Final *mīm* has been flattened on to the line and has an almost triangular tail. The medial form of *hā'* alternates between a group C type (KFQ71, recto, line 3) and a group D type (line 12).

The forms assumed by *'ayn* are particularly interesting: at the beginning of a word, it has a wide, rounded opening, while a short rounded v is set on top of a thin shaft in the medial form. In medial *'ayn* and medial *qāf* (KFQ71, recto, line 15), the ligatures which connect them to the two adjoining letters are rounded, closely following the circular line of the body of the letter. *Mashq* occurs frequently in this fat script, and the calligrapher often finished some letters (final *nūn*, *yā'*, *wāw*) with an enlargement of the stroke.

These three folios contain *Sūrat āl 'Imrān* (III), verses 178–85 (KFQ71), *Sūrat al-an'ām* (VI), verses 38–46 (KFQ47), and *Sūrat al-tawbah* (IX), verses 92–9 (KFQ46). The text is written in black ink; the diacritical strokes are a later addition. Red dots indicate the vocalization. Clusters of three strokes (I.I.I) mark the ends of the verses. A 'white' and green *alif*, outlined with red, indicates the end of a group of five verses (see KFQ47), and a circular device in red, green and yellow (I.E.Ib) plays the same role for groups of ten verses.



66 (KFQ71) recto

67
Single folio
9th century AD

11.2×20.3cm
Material Parchment
Accession no. KFQ78
Published Sotheby's, London, 14 December 1987, lot no.149

The folio bears no text, for both sides are occupied by a panel of illumination characteristic of the Abbasid period. In contrast to cat.75, where the central field occupies a smaller proportion of the design as a whole, the development of the central pattern is here given more prominence. On one side, the illumination (6.8×14.4cm) is surrounded by a frame in which an undulating gold scroll is set against a red ground. The central field (5×12.6cm) is filled with a trellis pattern drawn in ink. The trellis is formed by double fillets, and the points where they cross are filled with brown ink. Each lozenge formed by the trellis contains a stylized plant-based motif in the form of an elongated trefoil reserved against a hatched ground. Occasionally, there are two half-leaves above the trefoil.

The illumination on the reverse is almost identical in size (6.9×14.6cm) but relies on a totally different composition. A slightly thinner undulating gold scroll on a red ground forms the frame, but the field (5.6×13.1 cm) is illuminated in a more complex fashion. Geometric elements defined by bands reserved between two gold fillets combine to form a pattern of interlace. Three circles are set side by side within a rectangle whose corners describe a small loop, and they are all linked by two interlocking bands of semicircular loops to form oblong cartouches contiguous with the frame and various cruciform patterns in the centre. The three largest, which are contained within the circles, are ornamented with a plant-based motif.

Despite great skill, the illuminator has not been able to create a design that is symmetrical on the vertical axis. The central composition is not complete, as two elements have been left out, and the complex loop does not intersect in the middle of the side adjacent to the inner margin. As often happens, the illumination is not set symmetrically in the centre of the page: the upper and lower margins differ in size.

On both pages, there is a large vignette filled with palmette motifs in the left-hand margin.

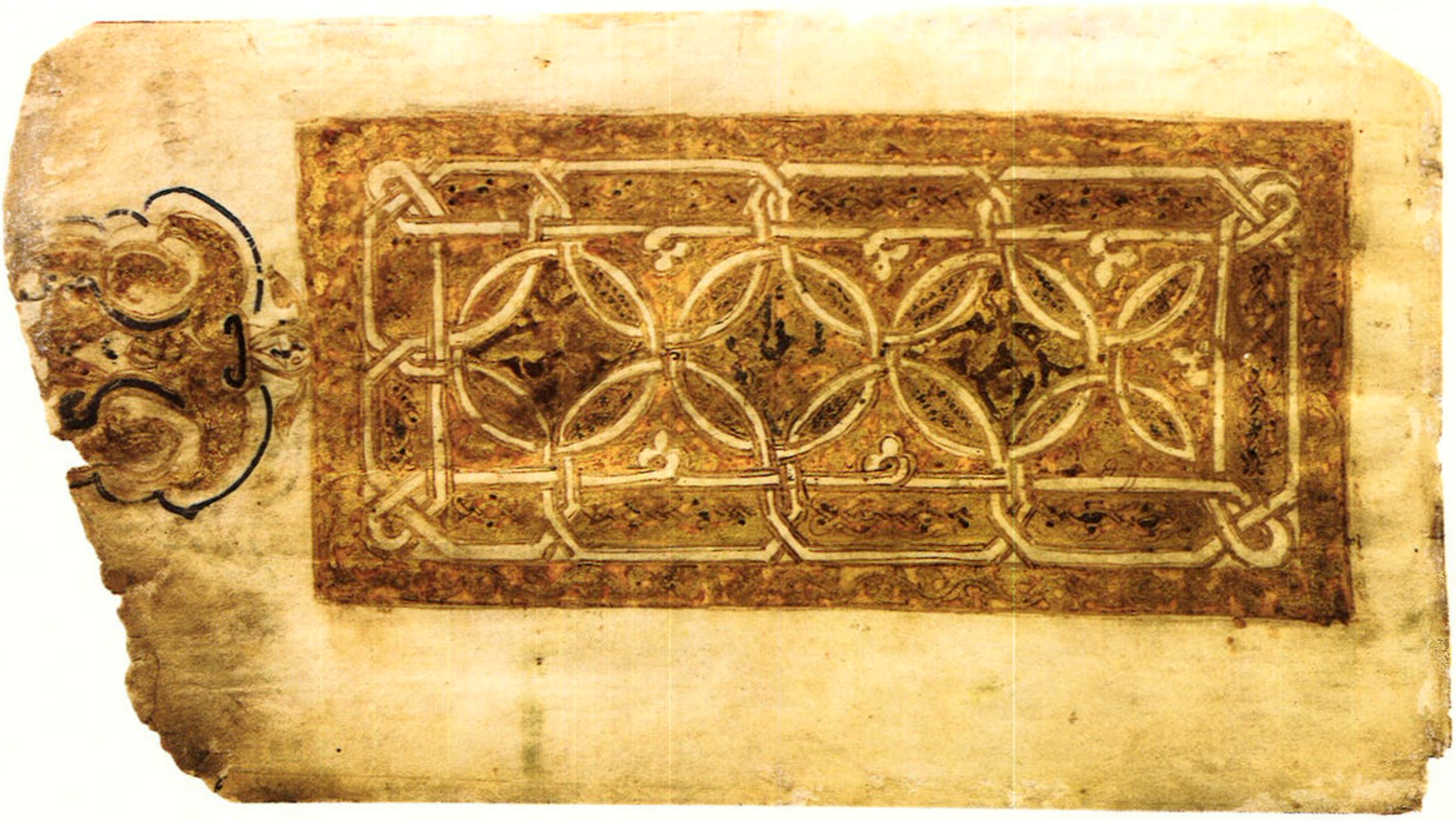
68
Single folio
Undated

18.3×25.5cm,with 12 lines to the page
Material Parchment; the verso is the hair side
Text area 9.1×17.5cm
Script Unclassified
Accession no. KFQ70

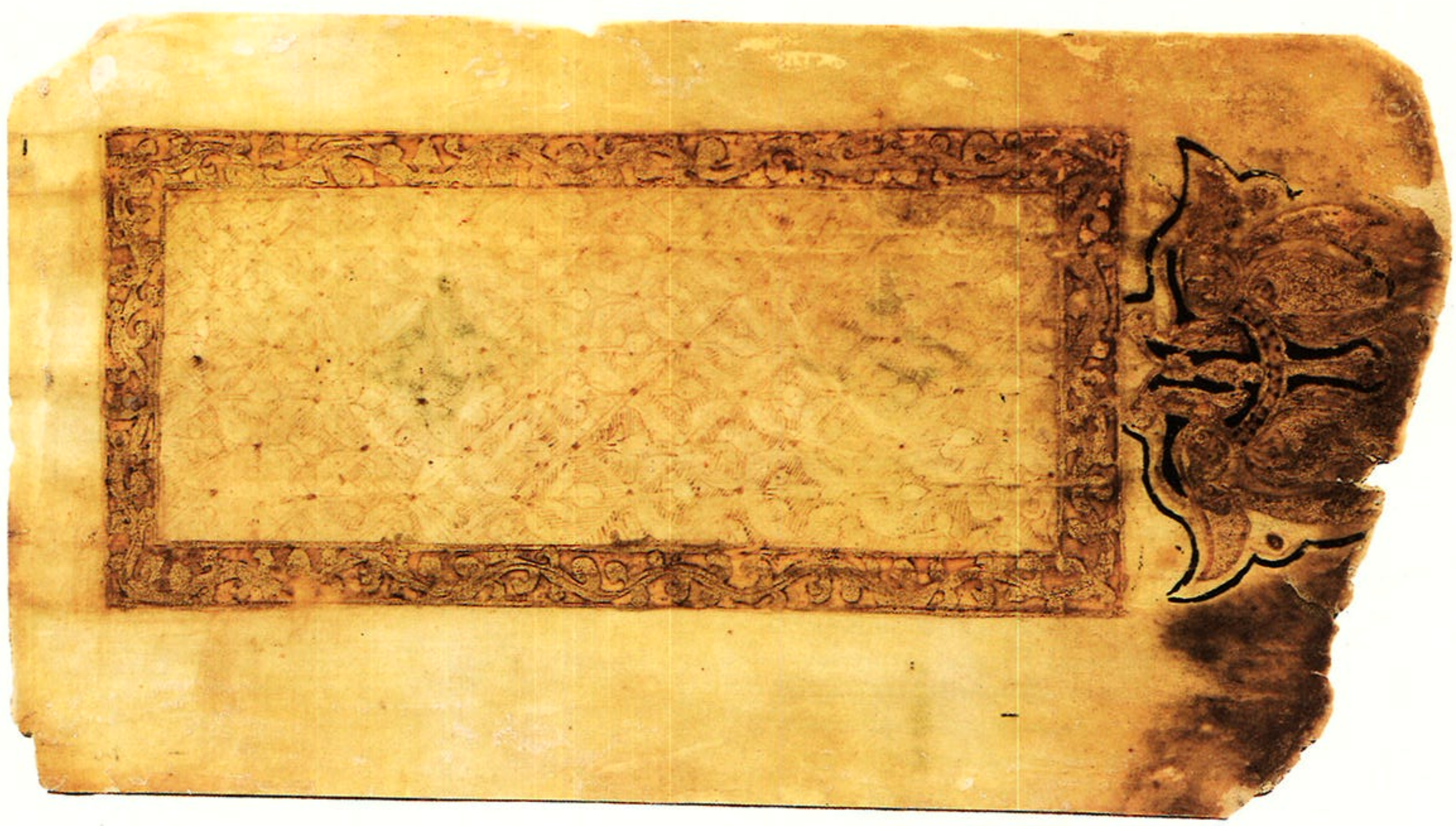
This folio is worthy of attention not so much for its script as for its illumination, which was inspired by epigraphical models.

The text runs from *Sūrat āl 'Imrān* (III), verse 200, to *Sūrat al-nisā'* (IV), verse 7. It is written in dark brown ink, with diacritical strokes. Red dots indicate the vocalization. A red semicircle indicates *shaddah*, while yellow and green dots mark *waslah* and *hamzah*. The verses are not divided, but the end of a group of five verses is indicated by a very complex *hā'*. The title and verse count of *Sūrat al-nisā'* are written in 'floriated Kufic', with alternate words in yellow and green.

The marks along the vertical sides of the text area may be some form of ruling.



67 recto



67 verso



68 verso



68 recto



69 recto

69
Single folio
Undated

25.2 × 30.7 cm, with
7 lines to the page
Material Parchment; the recto
is the hair side
Text area 16.9 × 23.5 cm
Script A style related to group D
Accession no. KFQ54
Published Christie's, London,
11 October 1988, lot no. 40

To some extent, the letter forms of this folio recall those of the D group, but they are rather crudely executed, and the precise position of this script within the D group is difficult to determine. Judging by the script, this leaf may have been part of the famous MS.322 in the Institute of Oriental Studies in Leningrad (al-Munajjid 1960, pl. 1).

The text – verses 18–23 of *Sūrat ṭā' hā'* (XX) – is written in black ink. Red dots indicate the vocalization, while the green dots mark the presence of an *alif* of prolongation. The verses are not divided, but a 3.C.I device indicates the end of each decade.



70 verso

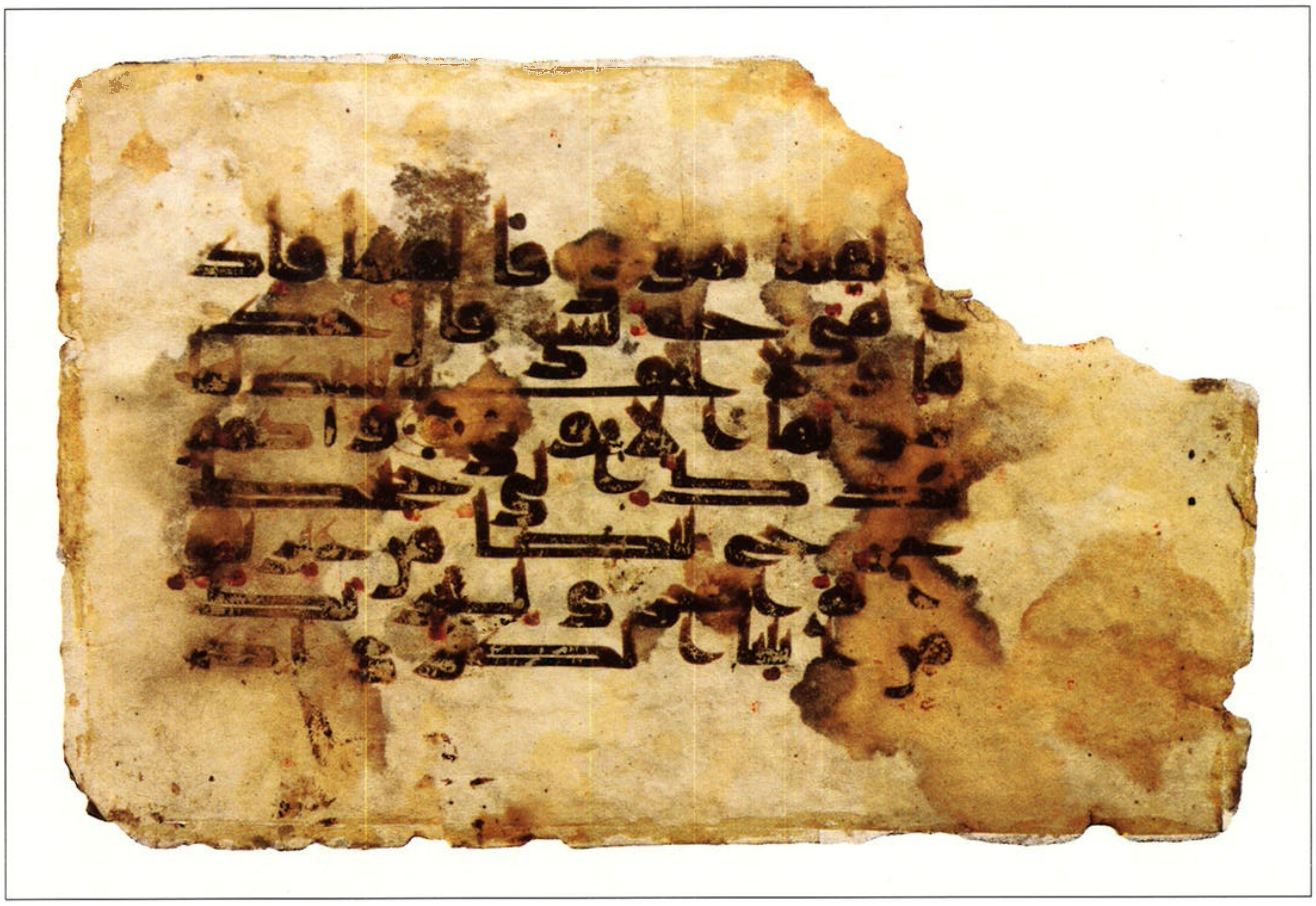
70
Single folio
Undated

19.7 × 25.5 cm, with
15 lines to the page
Material Parchment; the verso
is the hair side
Text area 15.3 × 21 cm
Script Unclassified
Accession no. KFQ58
Another fragment from the same Qur'an
Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS.arab.333a
(Déroche, 1983, no.270)

The text – verses 92–101 of *Sūrat Hūd* (XI) – is written in brown ink, with diacritical strokes. There is no vocalization. Horizontal strokes have been used to fill out lines 2 and 15 of the recto, and *mashq* has been employed in the ligatures between the letters. This use of *mashq* may have been an experiment, for it is known from only one manuscript, represented by the folio in the Khalili Collection and 20 folios in Paris. Clusters of strokes (1.1.3) mark the ends of the verses.



71 verso



*72 verso

71
Single folio
Undated

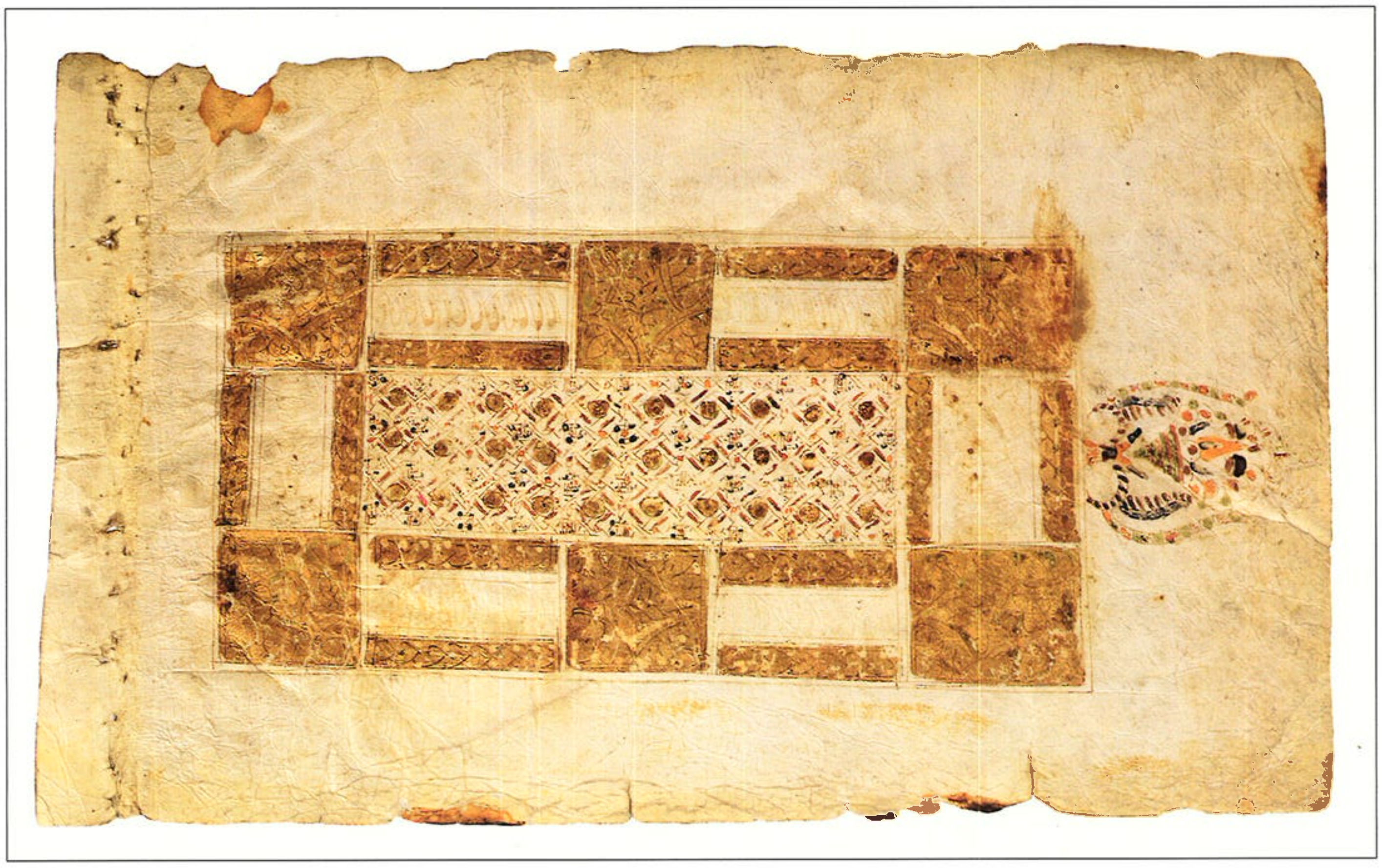
Fragmentary (largest dimensions now 30×30.5 cm); parts of 18 lines survive
Material Parchment; the verso is the hair side
Text area 27.1×30 cm
Script Unclassified
Accession no. KFQ49
Another fragment from the same Qur'an Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS.arab.332 (Déroche 1983, no.47)

Some letter forms seen here – *alif* and *mīm*, for example–resemble those of C.IA, but others, such as *nūn*, are only remotely connected to this style. The text runs from *Sūrat al-taghābun* (LXIV), verse 15, to *Sūrat al-ṭalāq* (LXV), verse 10, with a lacuna at surah LXV, verses 2–4. It is written in brown ink, with occasional diacritical strokes but no vocalization. Clusters of oblique strokes (I.I.I) mark the ends of verses. The surah title has been added in cursive script.

72
Single folio
End of the 9th century AD or 10th

11×17 cm, with 8 lines to the page
Material Parchment; the recto is the hair side
Text area 5.5×10.9 cm
Script Style D.V, with some influence of E
Accession no. KFQ9

The text, which consists of *Sūrat ṭā' hā'* (XX), verses 15–24, is written in black ink, with red dots to indicate the vocalization. Verses are not divided. A I.B.I device in gold, red and green marks the end of a group of ten verses at XX, 21. The upper left-hand corner of the folio is missing.



73 verso

73
Single folio
9th century AD

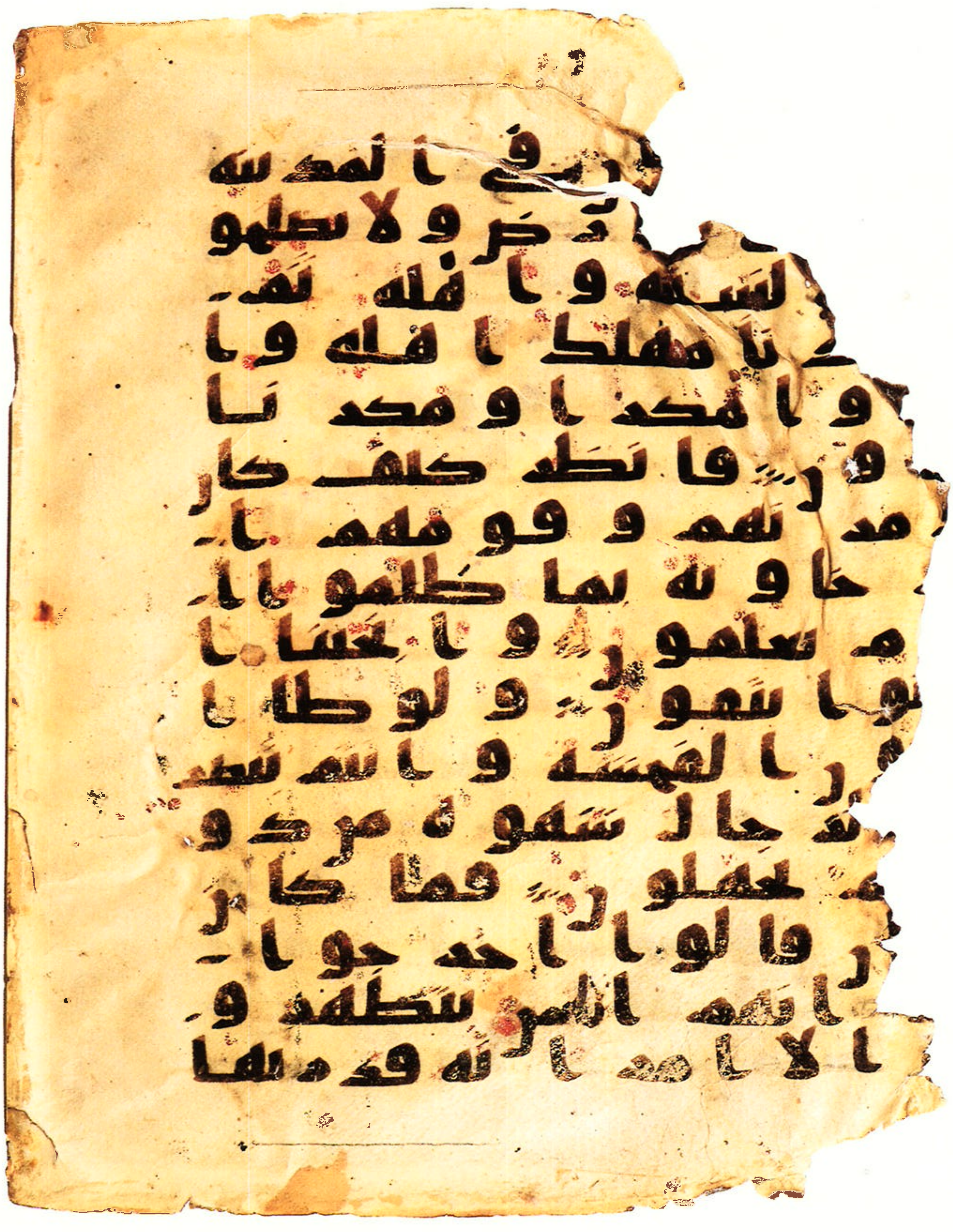
12.2×20 cm
Material Parchment
Accession no. KFQ81
Comparative item Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS.arab.353a, folio 11b (Déroche 1983, pl.IIIa)

This folio was probably the first leaf of a manuscript, for the recto bears a note which gives the number of folios, while the verso is filled by a panel of illumination (7.2×13.5 cm). The composition, which is of a standard type, relies on a ternary arrangement: there are three registers along the horizontal, and three rows of two squares along the vertical. The frame, larger than in the illuminated panels of cat.67, is composed of alternating squares and rectangles. The squares are set at the corners and in the centre of the longer sides; they are decorated with a plant-based composition organized around a lozenge with curved sides. The rectangles are divided into three bands. The middle band contains an undulating line, and there are rows of gold heart-shapes in the two outer bands. The field (2.7×8.2 cm) is divided into square lozenges by an interlace pattern of double fillets which can be compared with that of a manuscript in Paris (MS.arab.353a); the interstices are filled with gold dots.

74
Single folio
Undated

Fragmentary (height 21.9 cm; maximum width 17 cm), with 16 lines to the page
Material Parchment; the verso is the hair side
Text area Height 16.6 cm; maximum width 13 cm
Script Unclassified
Accession no. KFQ56

The text, which contains *Sūrat al-naml* (XXVII), verses 40–57, is written in dark brown ink, with diacritical strokes. Red dots indicate the vocalization. A cluster of strokes (I.I.I) marks the end of every verse. A gold Kufic *hā'* indicates the end of groups of five verses, and a circle (I.A.I) plays the same role after a group of ten verses.



*74 verso

The New Style

The scripts presented in this third section may have a more familiar look about them, but the chapter in the history of Arabic calligraphy to which they belong is still very obscure. Although in some contexts these scripts continued to be employed in periods relatively close to our own, the documentation is still too limited to be an adequate guide to their chronology or to their geographical distribution. As a result, we must proceed with great caution from one uncertain point of reference to another, and any firm statement concerning their development remains distinctly premature.

The family resemblance that can be observed between the specimens illustrated below might lead one to expect that they would be easier to define than was the case with the Early Abbasid styles, and one is tempted to adopt one of the names that have already been applied to these scripts as a group. A closer inspection, however, reveals an almost alarming variety: Eastern Kufic,[1] Eastern Persian Kufic,[2] 'broken' Kufic,[3] Naskhi Kufic,[4] and even Western Kufic and 'broken cursive',[5] have been used at some time.[6] The word Kufic, which was little enough applicable to the Early Abbasid scripts, is totally unsuitable here, for what connection can there be between the town of al-Kufah and these styles of script? The writers who used these names always felt that it was necessary to qualify the term Kufic in this context, and it is clear from this that they discerned a distinct difference between these scripts and those that could be described as Kufic without qualification. The only one of these names not to include the word Kufic, 'broken cursive', is of no more use, as it merely approaches the problem from the other end.

The inappropriateness of the many terms already used to describe these scripts has led us to devise a name that reflects their role in the history of Qur'anic calligraphy. As we shall see, the scripts themselves were rooted in a long tradition, but their use for copying the text of the Qur'an was new, and we have therefore called them the New Style. The New Style scripts are far from homogeneous, but a precise analysis of the variations between them must await further palæographical research. In the meantime, we have proposed a summary division into two groups. The first, which we call NS.I, contains the monumental varieties in which the line conforms as closely as possible to rules of geometry, and the contrast between thick and thin lines was deliberately accentuated. The scripts in the second group, NS.III, have more mobile lines and incorporate rounded forms as well as some that are more angular. The relationship between these two groups and that between the New Style and the Early Abbasid scripts can be observed by comparing their letter forms, as we have done in Table VI, where the Early Abbasid styles are represented by B.II and D.I, two well-attested scripts of the 9th century AD. Some changes–whether the appearance of new features or the disappearance of old–cannot be represented on such a table, however. The use of *mashq*, for example, seems to have gone into decline, while, in some instances, letters such as *alif* and *lām* were completed with a short stroke to the left which gave the shaft a bevelled top and produced a slight protuberance to the left. This may be considered the forerunner of the *tarwīs*, the short downward stroke seen at the top of these letters in later cursive hands.

Table VI shows that the shapes of the letters in the New Style scripts are generally different from those of the Early Abbasid styles. The influence of the cursive hands on the New Style is readily perceptible,[7] and a comparison of NS.III scripts with those found in dated non-Qur'anic manuscripts of the 9th century AD reveals striking similarities.[8] These 9th-century cursive scripts were the product of a long process of evolution whose beginnnings in the 7th century AD can be traced in Arabic papyrus material of the period.[9] There are no dated manuscripts from the 8th century AD, but, if the ascription of a number of literary papyri to this period is correct,

we must conclude that a script with many of the characteristics of NS.III was then in use and that it acquired a more definite and distinctive form as the century progressed.[10] By the 9th century, NS.III was the predominant script for copying non-Qur'anic texts,[11] and its use in so many other contexts no doubt conferred on it sufficient legitimacy for it to be used for copying the Qur'an by the end of the century.[12] The basically cursive character of its letter forms is the main feature that distinguishes NS.III from the Early Abbasid styles.[13] The identification of this cursive component leads us to wonder how far the contrast between the Early Abbasid scripts and NS.III is due to the use of two different writing techniques, whether in terms of the type of pen em-ployed, the method of sharpening the nib, or the way the pen was held, placed on the page or moved across it.

From what we know at present, the use of the monumental NS.I scripts for copying the Qur'anic text seems to have begun slightly later than was the case with NS.III.[14] It too may have been a 'secular' script at first, for the documentation, although even poorer than in the case of NS.III, suggests that there was a link between NS.I and a chancery style Adolf Grohmann called *jalīl*.[15] The small number of examples of *jalīl* which survive from the 8th century AD show that it was related to the scripts used in the papyri,[16] and it seems probable that its hieratic appearance reflected the calligraphic canon established by the Early Abbasid scripts. While the origins of NS.I may be surrounded in obscurity, it is easier to measure the impact of the New Style on the older tradition of Qur'anic calligraphy, for the Early Abbasid styles D.vb and D.vc, which emerged in the 10th century, were clearly formed under its influence.[17]

Although the Qur'an was written in both the Early Abbasid scripts and the New Style for a long time, the New Style eventually prevailed. We may presume that this success was in large part due to the ease with which the New Style could be written and read, for it was close to the scripts used for everyday purposes. The Early Abbasid scripts, on the other hand, required a specialist knowledge on the part of the reader, as the transcription of its characters into cursive shows (see cat.43, for example). In addition, these scripts were restricted to too narrow a field, even if this was the glorious task of propagating the Qur'an. As a result, non-Qur'anic manuscripts copied in one of the Early Abbasid scripts are extremely rare.[18] The situation is quite the reverse as regards the New Style. As we have seen, non-Qur'anic manuscripts in this script were produced earlier than Qur'ans, and they were relatively common throughout the Islamic world at least as early as the 9th century AD.[19] The problem of the suitability of the New Style for copying the Holy Book was solved when some of the basic ingredients of the Early Abbasid aesthetic were absorbed by the monumental version, NS.I.

As the product of a compromise between calligraphy and everyday practice, the New Style could only establish its legitimacy as a Qur'anic script gradually, and it is not surprising to find traces of subtle concessions to both, side by side. The old system of indicating the vowels was retained until quite late,[20] as can be seen from cat.87 and 88 below, which probably date from the 12th century AD, and from the Qur'an MS. Smith-Lesouëf 214 in the Bibliothèque Nationale, which was copied in AH 516 (AD 1123). When the modern system was used, the vowel signs were still written in the same red as the vocalic points had been in the old system, and this solution was adopted by the copyist of cat.84, for example. At the same time, a hand very like D was retained for surah titles and the numbering of groups of verses–the New Style was put to the same use once it had become obsolete, and the main text of the Qur'an was copied in cursive. A similar observation can be made about the more developed types of illumination found in Qur'ans in the New Style written in the 10th century. A comparison between the full-page

designs of cat. 73, which is in the horizontal format and seems to have belonged to a Qur'an in an Early Abbasid hand, and of folios 1b–2a of cat. 78, which is in the vertical format and introduces a volume copied in NS.I, shows that the composition of both rests on the same foundations: a broad frame set with six gold squares separated by rectangular areas and a field that contains a network of squares set on their ends.

The Qur'ans in the New Style first appeared during a period of considerable change in Islamic manuscript production, and their physical structure reflects these developments, which began at the end of the 9th century AD and continued during the 10th century and into the 11th. To the variations in format (horizontal or vertical) and material (parchment or paper), we can add those in the size of the manuscript, which ranged from the very large to the very small, and in the composition of the quires. In this last respect, the Qur'ans in the Early Abbasid styles seem to have been very stable, with quinions as the predominant form. These are found in some 10th-century New Style manuscripts, but others, such as cat. 78 and 82, both on parchment, are made up of quaternions, while cat. 84, produced in the 11th century, is–most unusually–made up of ternions. Although cat. 86–89 are all later, they are faithful to quinions; this may be the result of a conscious return to earlier ways, or it may simply be a coincidence.

The New Style was already being employed for copying the Qur'an at the very beginning of the 10th century AD, for a *juz'* in this script now in the Chester Beatty Library in Dublin was corrected in AH 292 (AD 905),[21] and a Qur'an in Mashhad dated AH 620 (AD 1223) shows that it was still in use for the same purpose in the early 13th century.[22] The script gained rapidly in popularity, and two manuscripts represented in the Khalili Collection, cat. 81, which was produced in AH 372 (AD 982–3), and cat. 83, which is from a Qur'an dated AH 383 (AD 993), show that by the end of the 10th century the Qur'an was being copied in the same style at two extremities of the Muslim world, Isfahan and Palermo. Curiously, both manuscripts were produced in the horizontal format, which seems to have been popular in the second half of the 10th century: it is as though the New Style had proved itself as a Qur'anic hand by this time and was considered suitable for use in the same format as that used with the Early Abbasid scripts. Nevertheless, manuscripts in the vertical format predominated, although it is not certain that the horizontal format was not also used from the beginning. As cat. 83 shows, we cannot even say that paper was confined to the vertical format.

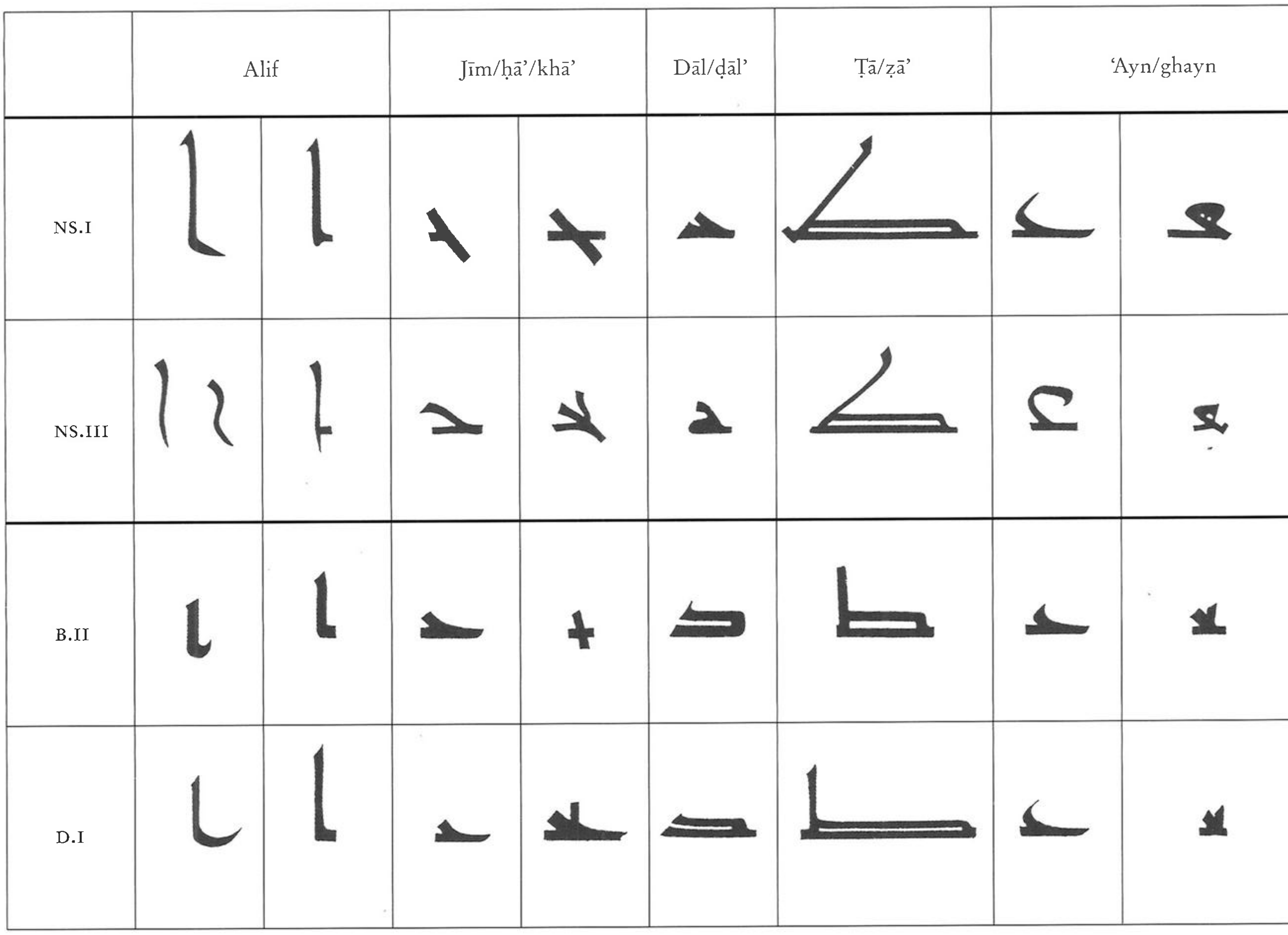
The success of the monumental version of the New Style, NS.I, from the 11th century onwards is made quite apparent by the number of manuscripts that can be attributed to this period and by their uneven quality. There was an increasing tendency, perhaps under the influence of epigraphy, towards a kind of mannerism, in which fortuitous ornamental elements were added to the normal letter forms: simple spurs and projections can be seen in cat. 93, but elaborate excrescences, and even tentative floriations, occur in other examples.[23] On the other hand, manuscripts produced in the 12th century and the early 13th, such as cat. 96, show that there was a move to improve legibility, perhaps a result of competition from cursive hands.[24] In these types of script, the line has become so slender that the distinction between thick and thin is partly eliminated, and every indentation is clearly marked.

Although the most instructive parallels may be drawn between the New Style and other scripts used on papyrus, parchment and paper, a comparison with those employed in inscriptions can furnish the key to some changes, as we have already suggested. The epigraphic material was subject to constraints that caused it to evolve in a different way,[25] but it is still possible to identify similarities in the treatment of some details. The idiosyncratic character of the inscriptions

has led specialists to devise criteria that give a special place to the ornamental additions rather than to the forms of the letters.[26] This difference of approach has not made the comparison any easier, but, for want of a more complete study of the New Style, we put forward the following considerations.[27] Generally speaking, despite the apparent daring of the ornamentation, the letter forms used in inscriptions seem fairly conservative, and there appears to have been a reluctance to incorporate the innovations of Qur'anic calligraphy. Some features appeared almost simultaneously in the middle of the 9th century: the projection beneath final *alif,*[28] the development of a curve in the shaft of *ṭā'* and *ẓā',*[29] and the heart-shaped *lām-alif,* which is slightly older.[30] It seems that a similar date may be proposed for the appearance of the sublinear ligature between the second *lām* and final *hā'* of *Allāh*.[31] On the other hand, heart-shaped *'ayn* is attested from the beginning of the 9th century,[32] but this development may not have been the result of a deliberate change to the shape of the letter so much as a product of the technical limitations imposed on someone using a chisel rather than a pen. The mason may have influenced the scribe in the way he treated the lower return of final and independent *lām,* for it is often laid along the base line; the occurrence of this feature in inscriptions was the result of the lack of space allowed for elements written below the line.[33] While scribes seem to have opted unanimously for the thickening of the upper left-hand part of vertical shafts, which, we have suggested, was a forerunner of *tarwīs*, the inscriptions show a degree of hesitation over the placing of this thickening, and one finds excrescences of various sizes, sometimes on one side of the shaft and sometimes on the other.[34]

As we have seen, the illumination of the oldest New Style manuscripts reflect the principles that prevailed in the 9th century AD, but new formulae were subsequently introduced, without damaging the autonomy of full-page compositions; their most striking feature, the increased importance of the circle in full-page designs, is illustrated by the finispiece of cat. 78, the surviving half of the frontispiece of cat. 80, and, in particular, the frontispiece of cat. 82, all from the 10th century. Some manuscripts were prefaced by tables which give the number of verses, surahs, words, letters and diacritical points. These tables, which first appeared at the end of the 9th century AD,[35] became more complex during the 10th, as those in cat. 82 (folios 1b–2a) and cat. 84 (folio 2a) show. Another innovation was the introduction of a new type of composition to mark the beginning of the text: in order to balance the overall effect of the frontispiece, the first surah was written on the right-hand page of the first opening of the text, and the first verses of the second surah were written on the left-hand page. The usual scroll and vignette were placed above the text on each page, and a series of superposed squares was added in the two outer margins. These last eventually took the form of *tabulae ansatae* and were filled with indications of divisions of the text or even the end of inscriptions which usually occur on the scroll. This arrangement, which is very common in Qur'ans of the Saljuq period,[36] was used in cat. 84, but the rendering of it here is still clumsy.

Table VI
Letter forms of the New Style



Alif. The lower return of the independent form was no longer a constant feature, and, where it did survive, the hooked shape in favour in the 9th century was abandoned. In NS.I, there was a preference for an angular treatment of the letter, while in NS.III both a stick-shaped form and an inverted-s type, in which the contrast between thick and thin was accentuated, were used. In both cases, the top of the letter was enlarged. In the final form, there is a slight projection below the base line.

Jīm. In B.II, the bar of the medial form was placed across the horizontal base line, but in D.I the bar rests on the line. In the New Style, the first solution seems to have been more popular, with considerable variations in the execution of the lower extremity of the bar. However, this form became rarer as the use of the superposed type increased.

Dāl. The two elements form an acute angle. There is more emphasis on the lower stroke, and the upper element sometimes seems to curve towards it.

Ṭā'. The shaft usually begins with a slant to the right and frequently ends with a curve to the left, and the top of the letter is sometimes enlarged; vertical shafts had become an exception.

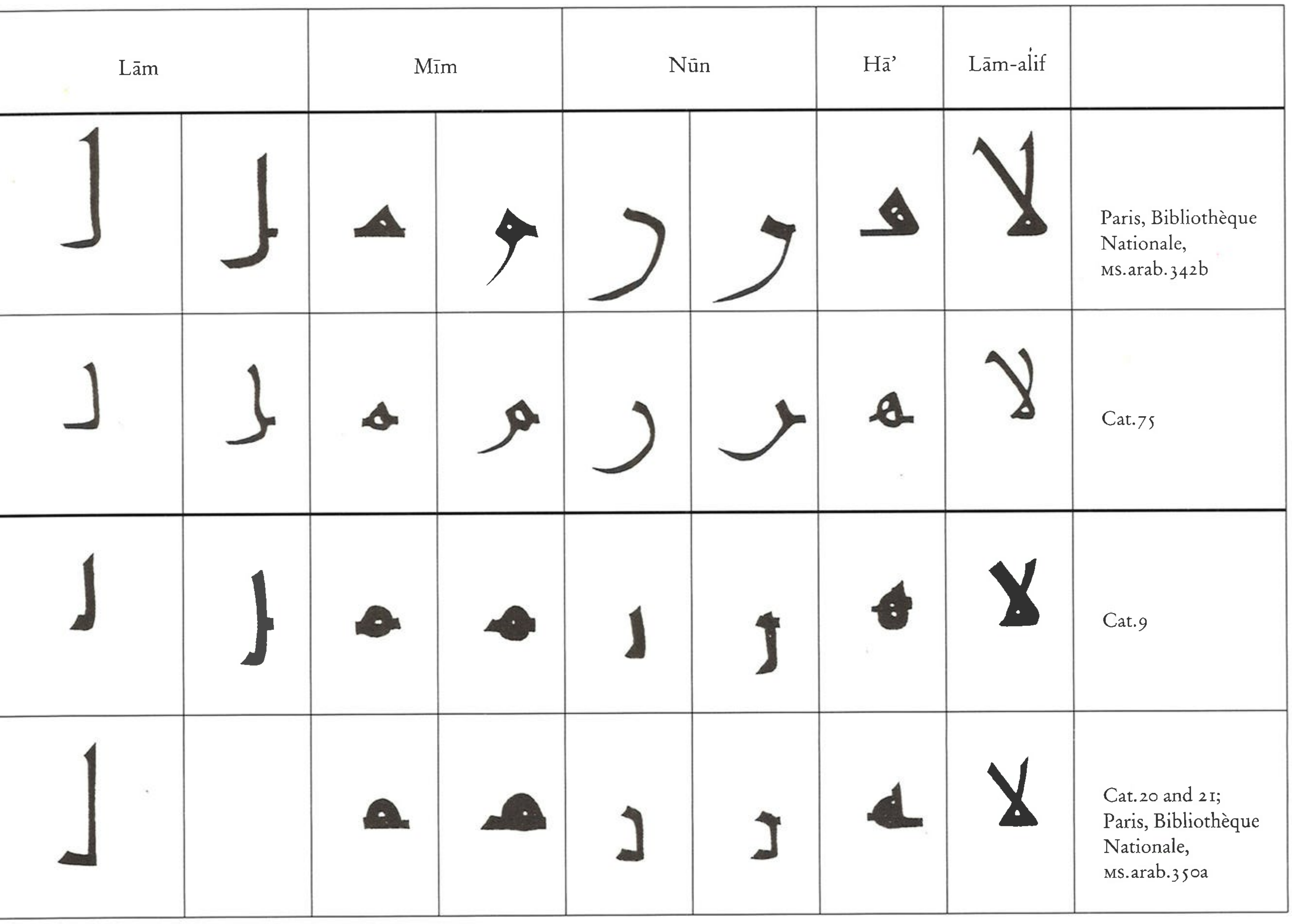
'Ayn. The medial form appears as a closed triangle resting on its tip and no longer as an asymmetrical v with two short antennae; occasionally, the triangle was transformed into a heart shape. The ligatures no longer look as though they have been laid along the base line: they often resemble a broken, even a serrated, line, particularly in NS.III. This type of ligature, which occurs before the letter, after the letter or both, is also associated with other letters. In initial *'ayn*, the hook is usually very wide.

Lām. The independent and final forms differ sharply in the placing of the lower return: in the independent form, it lies on the line, but in final *lām* it lies below the line.

Mīm. Entirely circular in B.II, and roughly circular in D.I, this letter assumed the shape of an irregular quadrilateral – very approximately, a lozenge. The thick horizontal tail resting on the line, a characteristic of the final form in earlier styles, was replaced by a fine, oblique curve which begins at the base of the letter.

Nūn. In the Early Abbasid scripts, there was a vertical emphasis in the final form of *nūn* and in the endings of final *sīn/shīn* and *ṣād/ḍād*. In the New Style, the body of the letter consists of a gentle curve which usually keeps closer to the base line and ends with a sharp point.

Hā'. The two very different treatments of this letter in the New Style may be identified, and these allow us to draw a demarcation line between two important stylistic trends, the 'geometrical' style of NS.I and the 'cursive' style of NS.III. In both cases, the vertical support so noticeable in both B.II and D.I was usually



replaced by a line sloping to the left. In the 'geometrical' variety, the shape of the letter suggests a trapezium whose slanting side has been laid on the base line. In the 'cursive' type, the path of the pen can be traced with ease: it has not been obscured, as it was in the angular variety and in the earlier styles. In one of the medial forms, the letter has been turned on its side, and the two 'eyes' sit side by side.

Lām-alif. There are several types. One of the most common resembles the form found in D.I manuscripts. In others, the *alif* describes a curve which bends to the left more than it turns upwards, while elsewhere the two arms were bent towards one another as though to form a heart shape.



75 folio 1a, folio 3b

75
Three folios
First half of the 10th century AD

13.5×20 cm, with
6 lines to the page
Material Parchment; the recto is the hair side in folio 1, while the verso is the hair side in folios 2 and 3
Text area 6.7×14 cm
Script Style NS.III
Accession no. KFQ48
Another fragment from the same Qur'an Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS.arab.382c (Déroche 1983, no.259)

This fragment provides a fine example of the NS.III script. As with cat.79, it is possible to draw a parallel with the Egyptian Qur'an of AH 325 (AD 936–7; Déroche 1983b, pp.155, 158–60 and pl.IVb), but in this case the format is horizontal, and the decoration, mainly pear-shaped verse markers, is strongly reminiscent of the illumination of the preceding century.

Folios 1 and 3 are a bifolio, while folio 2 preceded folio 3 in the second half of the same quire. The text is *Sūrat al-baqarah* (II), verses 177–180 (folio 1) and 187–194 (folios 2–3). It is written in black ink, with dots for the diacriticals, and red dots to indicate vocalization. A pear-shaped ornament, with the word *āyah* in gold on a green ground, marks the end of every verse. Verse 191 (according to the modern Egyptian edition) is followed by a 3.A.II medallion, which contains the number of verses written out in gold on a green ground and marks the end of a group of ten verses. The end of verse 192 is not indicated.


فاقتلوهم كذلك جزاء الكافرين
فإن انتهوا فإن الله غفور رحيم
وقاتلوهم حتى لا تكون فتنة ويكون
الدين لله فإن انتهوا فلا عدوان إلا
على الظالمين الشهر الحرام بالشهر
الحرام والحرمات قصاص



*76 folio 2a

76
Two folios
10th century AD

Fragmentary; largest dimensions now 12.1×17.7 cm (folio 1) and 12.4×18 cm (folio 2); there are 7 lines to the page
Material Parchment; the recto is the hair side
Text area 6.8×12.5 cm
Script Style NS.III
Accession no. KFQ40

The text – *Sūrat Hūd* (XI), verses 31–36 and 45–49 – is written in brown to dark brown ink. A few diacritical marks have been added, and red dots are used to indicate the vocalization; the green dots appear to be corrections. The verses are not divided. A gold Kufic *hā'* marks the end of a group of five verses. The lower right-hand corner of folio 1 has been lost.

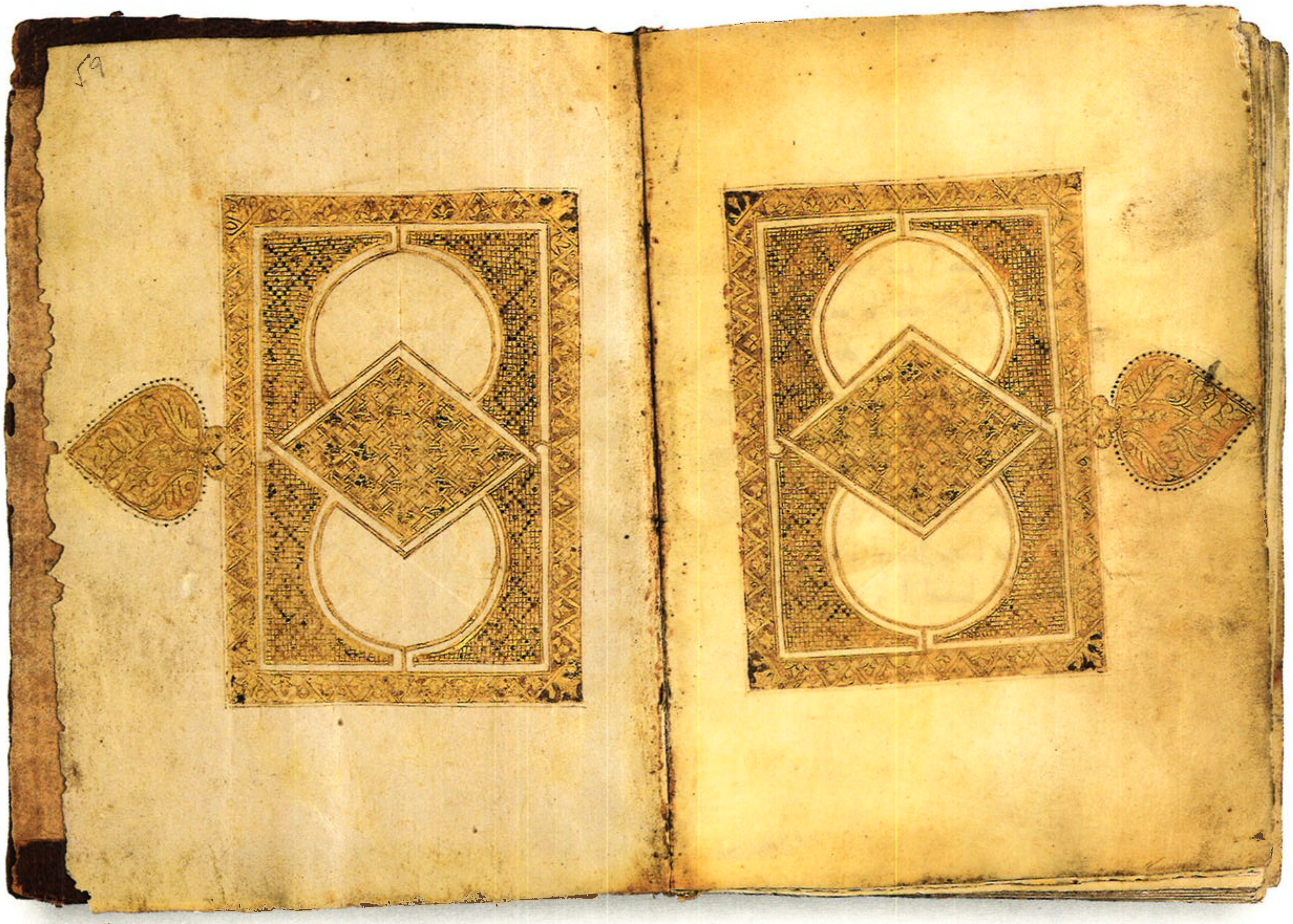


*77 verso

77
Single folio
10th century AD

10.6 × 16 cm, with
7 lines to the page
Material Parchment
Text area 5.4 × 10.4 cm
Script A style close to NS.III
Accession no. KFQ32

The script of this folio has the appearance of a style intermediate between NS.III, which it most closely resembles, and NS.I, with its great stiffness. The text, which runs from *Sūrat Yūnus* (x), verse 108, to *Sūrat Hūd* (XI), verse 5, is written in brown ink, with diacritical strokes; some dots have been added. Red dots indicate the vocalization. Individual verses are not punctuated. The upper part of the folio has been severely damaged, so that the title of *Sūrat Hūd* has been lost.



78 folios 58b–59a



78 folios 14b–15a

78
Part 9 of a ten-part Qur'an 10th century AD

59 folios, 15.5 × 11 cm, with 13 lines to the page
Material Parchment
Text area 9.2 × 6.5 cm
Script Style NS.I
Binding Contemporary
Accession no. QUR286

In this manuscript we can see the emergence of the New Style as a serious rival to the Early Abbasid scripts. Although the New Style probably owed its success primarily to the greater ease with which it could be written, this example shows that it could also attain the status of fine calligraphy. The illumination, however, remains faithful to older principles, which are applied here to a manuscript in the vertical format.

The text of this Qur'an section runs from *Sūrat fuṣṣilat* (XLI), verse 46, to *Sūrat al-ḥadīd* (LVII), verse 29. It is written in black ink, with diacritical strokes. The vocalization is indicated by red dots. Some orthoepics have been added. Individual verses are punctuated by a 3.I.I rosette, while the end of every fifth verse is marked by a gold Kufic *hā'*, and a 3.B.II, 3.C.II or 4.A.II device with the number of verses written out in gold NS.I script has been placed either in the margin or in the text to indicate the end of every tenth verse. The title and verse count of each surah appear within a band of illumination, which is extended into the margin by an elaborate vignette. The words are written in D script, reserved against a ground decorated with plant-based and geometric patterns. The beginning of every *juz'* is marked by the words *juz' min thalathīn.* The *sajdah* is indicated by 5.C.II device, with the word *sajdah* written in gold on a blue ground.

Two illuminated double pages mark the beginning and the end of the volume. The frontispiece (folio 1b–2a; 9.1 × 6.5 cm) is surrounded by a frame 1.7 cm wide, which is divided alternately into rectangles and squares, all outlined by a band of gold heart-shaped motifs. A gold chessboard pattern occupies the six squares, which were placed at the corners and in the middle of the two longest sides. In the rectangles, a gold zigzag is used as a support for plant-based designs, also in gold, on a red ground. The central field (5.5 × 2.9 cm) is filled with a trellis pattern of double fillets rendered in ink. Each of the small lozenges formed by the trellis bears a vegetal design, also in ink. The general composition is close to that of a manuscript in London (British Library, ADD.MS.7214), which is dated AH 427 (AD 1036).

Some of the same repertory of designs has been employed in the finispiece (folios 58b–59a), but in a different manner. This is a more elaborate and innovative composition: even the preparatory ruling reflects the care with which it was planned. The frame is narrower than in the frontispiece and is divided into triangles by a zigzag line. In every triangle there is a small vegetal design, and in the corners, where the triangle is larger, the design is more developed. The field (8.1 × 5.2 cm) is occupied by two tangent circles, which are cut by a lozenge placed at the centre of the illumination. An interlace pattern covers the surface of the lozenge; the circles have been left blank; and the remainder of the field is filled with the chessboard pattern found in the squares in the frame of the frontipiece. Here the chessboard pattern is used over a larger surface, and some of the squares have been painted in black to form lozenges.

Most of the quires have eight folios. There are three bifolios and two isolated folios arranged symmetrically between the second and third bifolios. Hair sides face flesh sides, as usual, and the quire begins with a hair side. The first quire, which has ten leaves, was formed by adding an extra bifolio to the normal pattern, while the last quire has only nine leaves. Traces of a vertical ruling with ink can be seen in the outer margin on some folios. Ruling with a dry point is reserved for the illuminations.

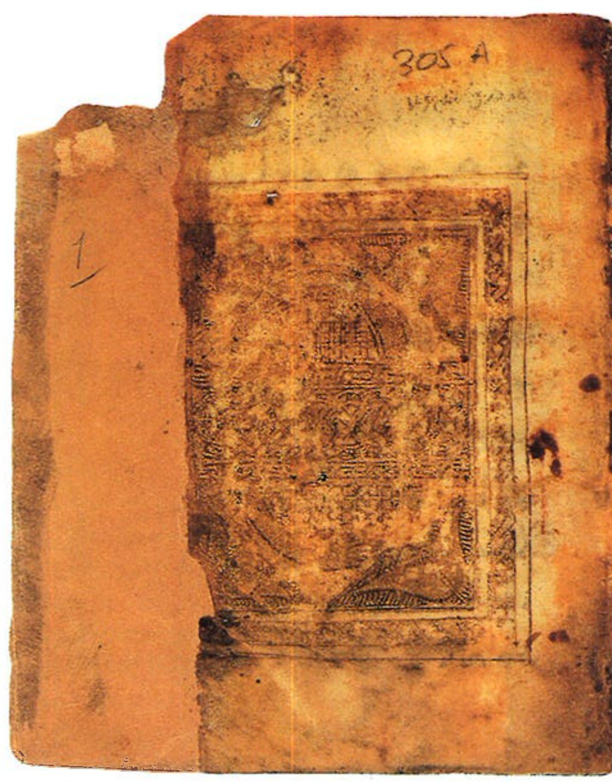
The binding is of light-brown leather over paper pasteboards. The flap is missing. The outer covers are decorated with a double frame, somewhat worn, and a circular figure 3cm wide in the centre of the field. The central motif is filled with a blind-tooled interlace pattern. The same pattern appears in the inner frame, while an S-design, also blind-tooled, is repeated in the outer frame. These bands of decoration are set between groups of fillets.



*79 folios 1b–2a



80 folio 32a



80 folio 1a

79
Bifolio
First half of the 10th century AD

12.3×9.2 cm, with
8 lines to the page
Material Parchment
Text area 7.3×6.2 cm
Script Style NS.III
Accession no. KFQ26

The main features of early New Style scripts are to be found on this bifolio. The vertical format seen here was also to become characteristic of manuscripts written in these hands, although there are exceptions, such as cat. 75–77. The Egyptian Qur'an written by Shanbak ibn Muhammad in AH 325 (AD 936–7; Déroche 1983b, pp. 155, 158–60 and pl. IVb) offers an interesting parallel.

This item was the central bifolio of a quire, and the text, which is written in dark brown ink, comprises *Sūrat al-ma'ārij* (LXX), verse 41, to *Sūrat Nūḥ* (LXXI), verse 4, and *Sūrat Nūḥ* (LXXI), verses 4–10. Most of the diacritical dots have been added; unusually, three dots below the letter *sīn* differentiate it from *shīn*, and one dot below the letter *rā'* differentiates it from *zayn*. Red dots indicate the vocalization, but the modern vowel signs and the orthoepics have been added by a later hand. Individual verses are punctuated by a 3.I.1 device, while the end of every fifth verse is marked by a gold Kufic *hā'*, and a 3.B.II medallion in the margin, with the number of verses written out in gold on a red ground, indicates the end of every group of ten verses. The title and verse count of *Sūrat Nūḥ* (folio 1b) are written in gold D script, outlined in ink, and are accompanied by a vignette which extends into the margin.

80
Part 7 of a 10-part Qur'an
10th century AD

75 folios, 9.6×7.3 cm, with
10 lines to the page
Material Parchment
Text area 6.3×5.2 cm
Script Style NS.I
Binding Contemporary
Accession no. QUR305

As in cat. 78, we see here a mixture of innovation and moderate conservatism. The script is a version of NS.I, in which more emphasis was laid on the base line: the elements of the script that occur at this level are thicker than the rest. The illuminator made great use of well-tried motifs but succeeded in creating a new composition for the one full-page illumination that survives (folio 1a). This originally formed the left-hand half of the frontispiece.

The text, which is incomplete, runs from *Sūrat al-furqān* (XXV), verse 24, to *Sūrat al-naml* (XXVII), verse 23 (folios 1b–23); from *Sūrat al-naml*, verse 44, to *Sūrat al-Rūm* (XXX), verse 60 (folios 24–65); and from *Sūrat Luqmān* (XXXI), verse 27, to *Sūrat al-aḥzāb* (XXXIII), verse 25 (folios 66–75). It is written in black ink, with some diacritics added. The vocalization is indicated by red dots. Individual verses are punctuated by a gold circle (2.2.1), while a gold Kufic *hā'* marks the end of every fifth verse. A 3.C.II device has been placed in the margin to indicate the end of each group of ten verses; it contains the number of verses written out in gold NS.I script on a red, green or blue ground. A similar device marks the *sajdahs*. The title and verse count of each surah are written in gold NS.I, outlined in ink, and a vignette extends into the outer margin next to this heading.

The surviving half of the frontispiece is damaged, and the left-hand edge of the composition has been lost (height, 6 cm; maximum width now 4 cm). The frame consists of a strapwork design between two blank fillets. The field (4.7×3.6 cm) is divided in two by a horizontal band 2cm wide which contains an interlace of circles and zigzag. Both halves are cut into three roughly triangular elements by two fillets which meet in the middle of the width. In both cases, the two smaller outer triangles contain a calix on a hatched ground, while the third is partly filled by two concentric semicircles 2.2cm in diameter. A gold grid design has been drawn in the inner half-circle.

The plain binding is made of dark brown leather and lacks its flap. The edges are in lighter brown leather, and the spine has been redone.

81
Two quires
Palermo, AH 372 (AD 982–3)

20 folios, 17.6×25 cm, with
17 lines to the page
Material Parchment
Text area 9.5×16 cm
Script NS.III
Bindings Modern
Accession nos QUR261, QUR368
Another fragment from the same Qur'an
Istanbul, Nuruosmaniye Library, MS 23

According to the colophon on folio 1b of the Nuruosmaniye Qur'an, the manuscript of which these two quires originally formed part was finished in 'Madinat Siqilliyyah' in AH 372 (AD 982–3). 'Madinat Siqilliyyah' refers to Palermo, which was then under Muslim rule. The Qur'an in question is the first copy known to have been produced in Muslim Sicily and is therefore a manuscript of some importance. Together with the Isfahan Qur'an discussed below (cat. 83), it belongs to a series of manuscripts in the horizontal format which were written in the various NS scripts during the second half of the 10th century AD; like the monumental Qur'an written 40 years later by 'Ali ibn Ahmad al-Warraq for the nurse of the Zirid amir al-Mu'izz ibn Badis (Marçais & Poinssot 1948, p. 61, fig. 16 and pp. 310–11; Lings & Safadi 1976, no. 25; Paris 1982, nos 356–7), it is an outstanding example of the diffusion of the NS scripts throughout the Islamic world and of their adaptation to local traditions of book production.

The Palermo Qur'an was produced with great care. Unlike cat. 83, it was written on parchment, a reflection of the conservatism of the Western Islamic world, where parchment was used for copying the Qur'an for far longer than in the East. Both of the quires in the Khalili Collection are made of five bifolios, arranged in the usual way: hair sides face flesh sides, and both quires begin with a hair side. The script is clear, and the composition of the pages is very regular, although there is no trace of ruling. From time to time, as on folio 4a, the calligrapher deliberately extended the tail of a horizontal letter outside the justification. Despite the relatively small scale of the script, the contrast between thick and thin strokes, a basic feature of New Style calligraphy, is maintained. As in many manuscripts of this period, the script used for the titles and marginal inscriptions was different from the script of the text itself.

These two quires contain *Sūrat al-anbiyā'* (XXI), verse 62, to *Sūrat al-shu'arā'* (XXVI), verse 113. The text is written in black ink, without diacritical dots. The vocalization is indicated by red dots. Orthoepics are also in red, with the exception of *hamzah*, which is marked by a yellow dot whose position indicates the vocalization; where *hamzah* coincides with *sukūn*, the dot is blue. *Shaddah*, which either has its modern shape or takes the form of a semicircle, is used in the same dual way. Individual verses are punctuated by a small 3.A.II device. Every fifth verse is followed by an elaborated form of Kufic *hā'* in gold, outlined in ink. The letter is surrounded by red and green dots. The end of every tenth verse is marked by a very distinctive quadrangle with a loop at each corner. The shape, which varies between a square and a rectangle, depending on the space available, is defined by a gold fillet. There is a green or red dot on each side, and the red or green ground bears a letter in ink, which gives the number of verses according to the *abjad* system. The title and verse count of each surah are written in gold in a script close to D; in the title of *Sūrat al-nūr* (folio 10b) there is a floriated *nūn*.

Various divisions of the text are indicated in the margins. Sixtieths (*ḥizb*, plural *aḥzāb*) are indicated by a circle within which the word *ḥizb* has been written in gold between two vegetal motifs reserved against the red ground (see folio 2b, for example). The other divisions – thirtieths (*juz'*; see folios 7a and 16a), tenths, ninths, sevenths and fifths (see folio 16a in particular) – are indicated by the name outlined in ink and red or green paint in a script related to D. The *sajdahs* are marked in the same fashion, but the word is written in gold (see folio 3b, for example).



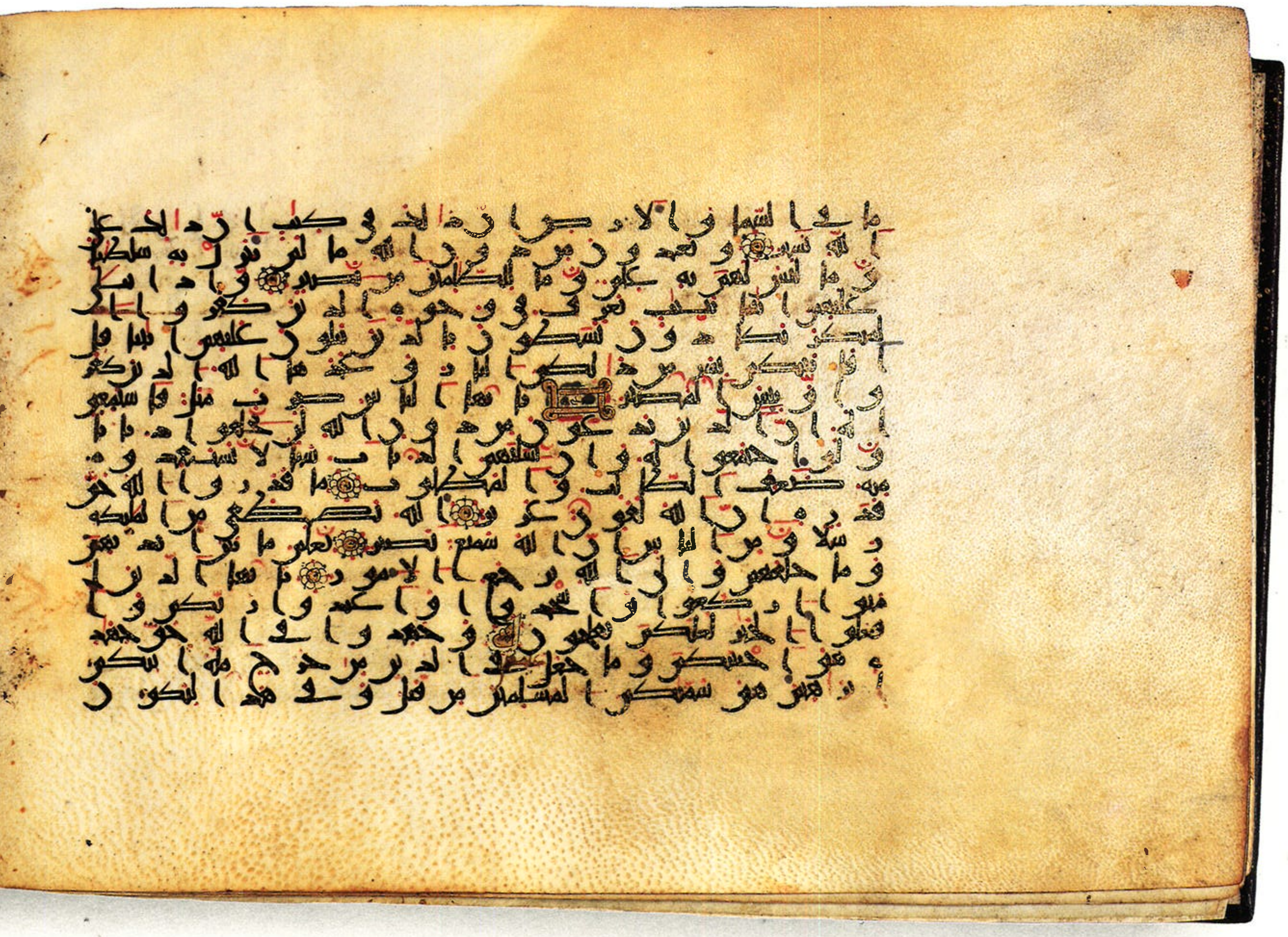
81 (QUR 261) folio 2b

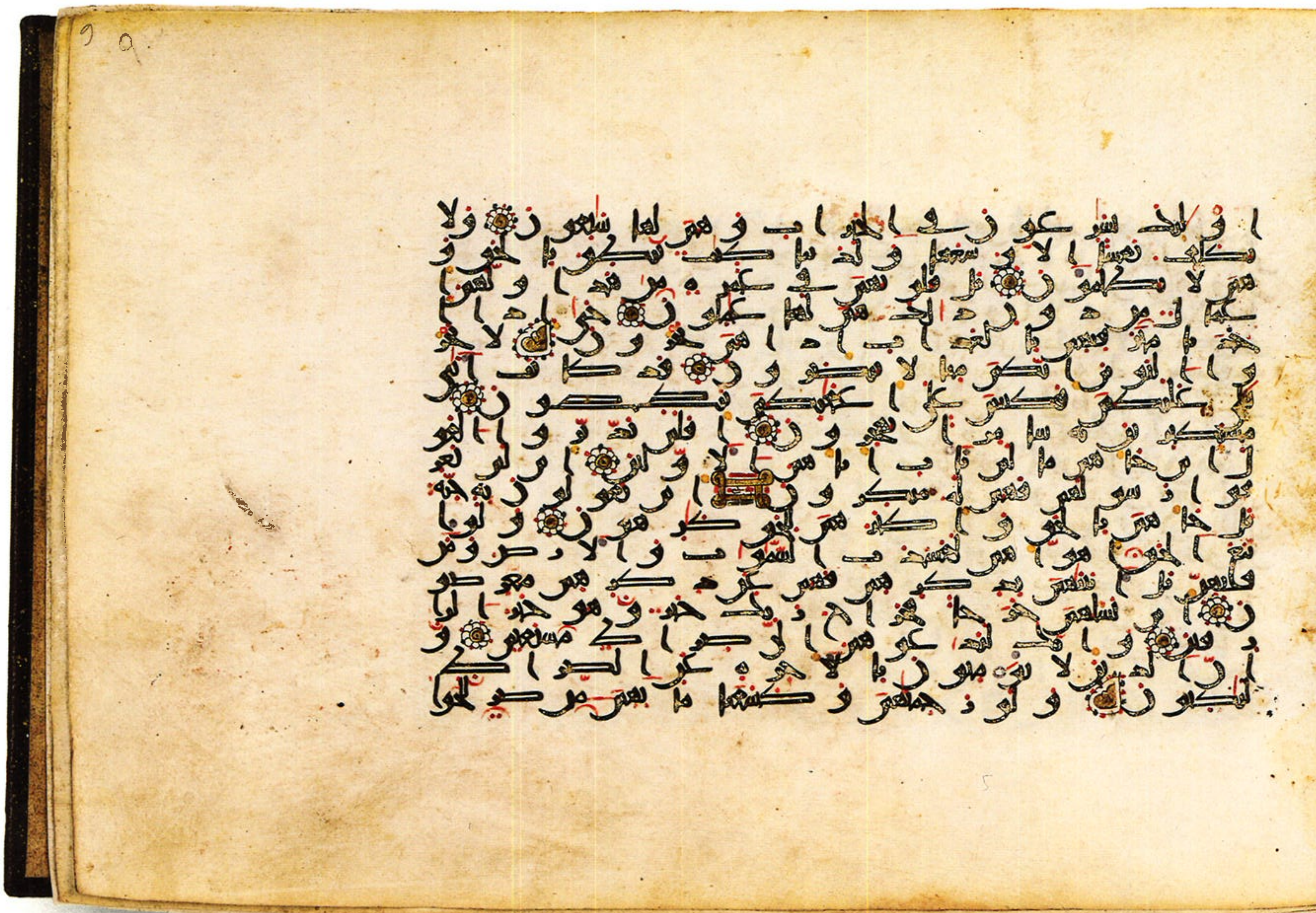


81 (QUR 368) folio 6b

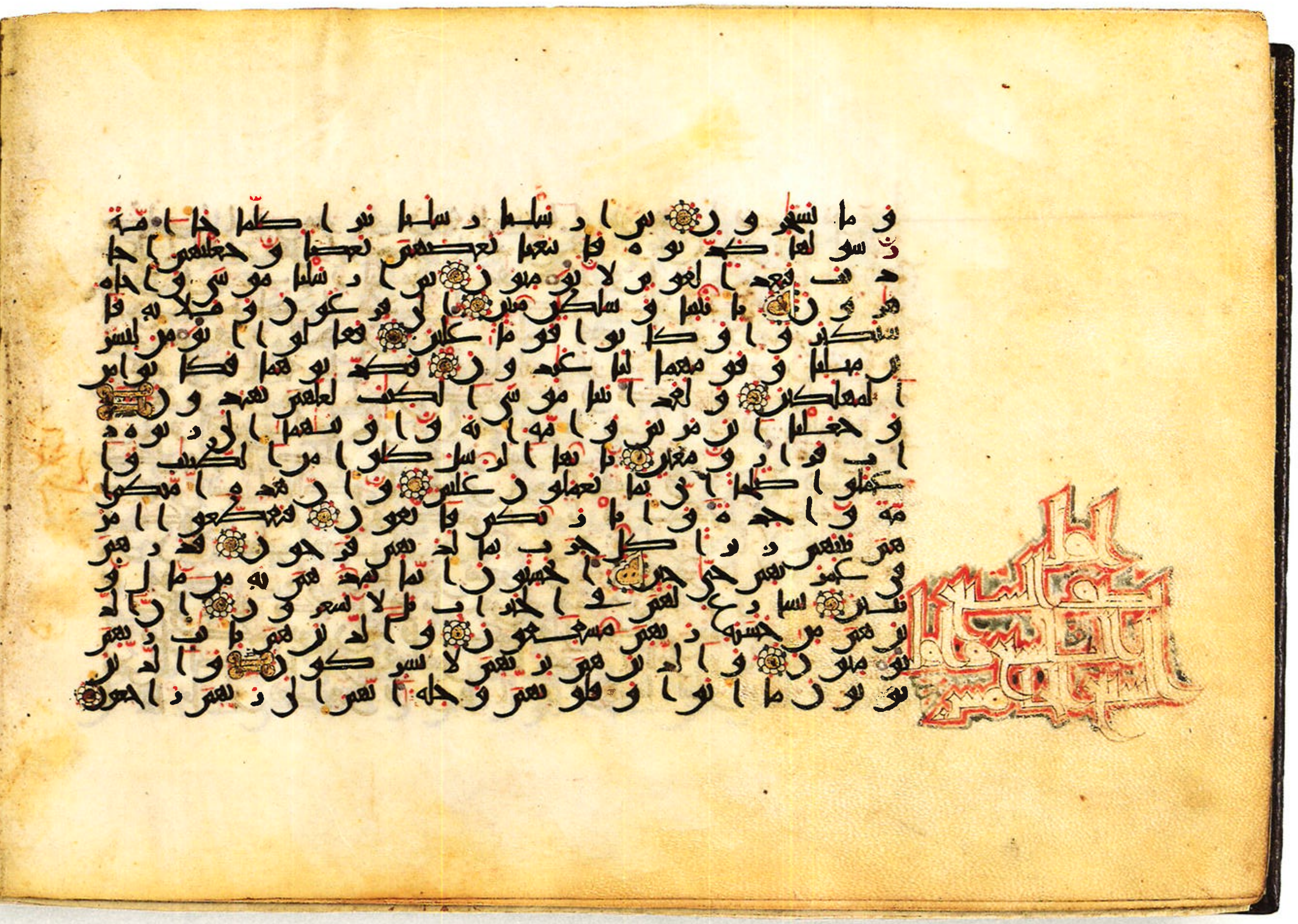


81 (QUR 261) folios 6b–7a





81 (QUR 261) folios 8b–9a



وما يستأخرون ۝ ثم أرسلنا رسلنا تترا كلما جاء أمة
رسولها كذبوه فأتبعنا بعضهم بعضا وجعلناهم أحا
ديث فبعدا لقوم لا يؤمنون ۝ ثم أرسلنا موسى وأخاه
هرون بآياتنا وسلطان مبين ۝ إلى فرعون وملايه فا
ستكبروا وكانوا قوما عالين ۝ فقالوا أنؤمن لبشر
ين مثلنا وقومهما لنا عابدون ۝ فكذبوهما فكانوا من
المهلكين ۝ ولقد آتينا موسى الكتاب لعلهم يهتدون ۝ و
جعلنا ابن مريم وأمه آية وآويناهما إلى ربوة ذا
ت قرار ومعين ۝ يا أيها الرسل كلوا من الطيبات وا
عملوا صالحا إني بما تعملون عليم ۝ وإن هذه أمتكم أ
مة واحدة وأنا ربكم فاتقون ۝ فتقطعوا أمر
هم بينهم زبرا كل حزب بما لديهم فرحون ۝ فذرهم في
غمرتهم حتى حين ۝ أيحسبون أنما نمدهم به من مال و
بنين ۝ نسارع لهم في الخيرات بل لا يشعرون ۝ إن الذ
ين هم من خشية ربهم مشفقون ۝ والذين هم بآيات ربهم
يؤمنون ۝ والذين هم بربهم لا يشركون ۝ والذين
يؤتون ما آتوا وقلوبهم وجلة أنهم إلى ربهم راجعون ۝



*82 folios 2b–3a



*82 folios 3b–4a



*82 folios 141b–142a

82
Single-volume Qur'an
Second half of the 10th century AD

166 folios, 7.3×6 cm, with 30 lines to the page
Material Parchment
Text area 5.4×4.1 cm
Script A miniature form of NS
Binding Later lacquer covers with floral decoration and a black leather spine
Accession no. QUR430
Published Christie's, London, 11 April 1989, lot no. 52

Although there are considerable differences in their physical construction and illumination, cat. 82 and the two quires from Palermo discussed above (cat. 81) are closely related in terms of their script. The proportions of the two hands are quite different, and this obscures their similarities. Indeed, the script of cat. 82 is so small that some details that are clearly apparent in the larger hand of cat. 81 could not be retained. Nevertheless, the letter forms are basically the same.

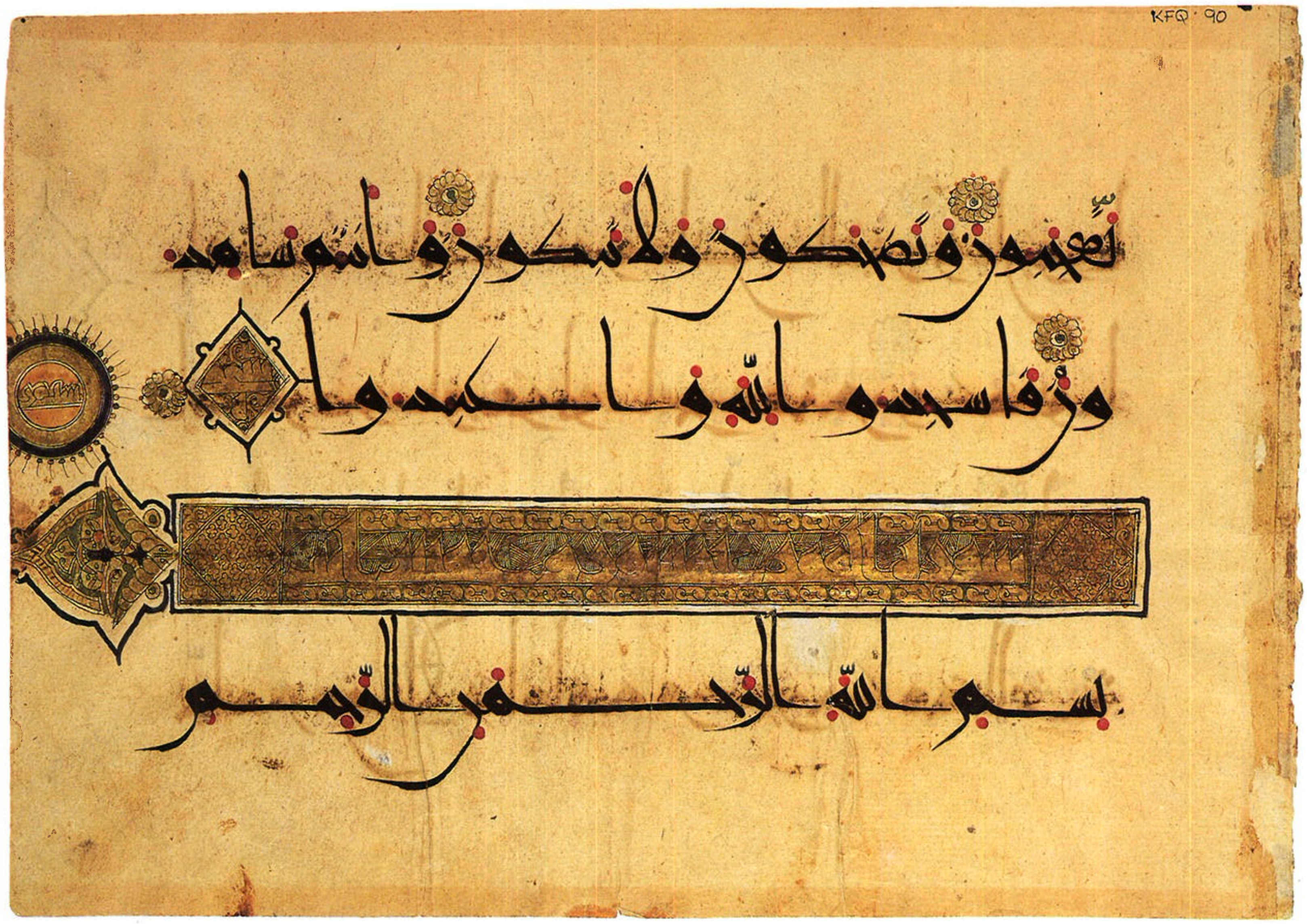
The existence of similar letter forms in the two manuscripts does not mean that they were both produced in Sicily. They are very different from a codicological point of view, in terms both of their format and of the construction of their quires: those of cat. 82 have eight leaves and are almost exclusively made of bifolios arranged in groups of four, while cat. 81 is more conservative and has quires of ten folios.

On folio 1b–2a, the number of surahs, verses, words etc. has been written in gold D.V script (7 lines to the page) within a strapwork frame. The illumination on the following double page (folio 2b–3a) is organized around a central circular design and follows a model used in vertical-format Qur'ans throughout the 10th to 12th centuries AD. The composition is outlined by a white band which surrounds the field (4.3×2.9 cm) and defines the central circle (diameter 1.5 cm). The circle is filled with a gold chessboard pattern in which the black squares suggest the form of lozenges and is surrounded by a row of gold dots. In each corner the white band creates a quarter-circle filled with minute gold trefoils on what was probably a black ground. A gold and black chessboard pattern, with squares larger than in the central circle and set at an oblique angle, fills the four areas between the central circular figure and the corner-pieces. The frame (0.5 cm wide) echoes the strapwork motif of folios 1b–2a. A medial vignette extends into the margin on both pages, and the whole composition is outlined in blue. On folio 3b, the titles of *Sūrat al-fātiḥah* and *Sūrat al-baqarah* appear in D.V script reserved against the gold ground of a decorative band.

The title and verse count of the other surahs are written in gold D script and outlined in black ink. To the side of the surah heading, a vignette extends into the outer margin. All the vignettes are outlined in blue, but their shapes vary greatly. The components are all drawn from the plant world, except in nine cases with short inscriptions (see folios 37b, 71b, 75b, 114b, 140b, 144a, 151b, 153a and 158b). Trimming of the pages has made these inscriptions illegible. In the margin, under the vignette, the place of revelation was recorded in gold D script. In one place, below the vignette next to the heading of *Sūrat al-zumar* (XXXIX) on folio 125b, this inscription is contained in a square outlined in ink.

The text, which is defective at the end, is written in black ink, without diacritical dots. Red dots indicate the vocalization. A 3.1.2 rosette has been placed in the text to mark the end of every tenth verse. It is accompanied in the margin by a 4.A.II device, which contains the number of verses written out in a gold script, perhaps a type of style D, on a green or red ground. The margins have been trimmed so severely that the markers that recorded the conventional divisions of the Qur'anic text (*juz', ḥizb, sub'* etc.) have almost disappeared. A gold frame outlined in black surrounds the text at the beginning of the manuscript (folios 3b-9b); it may be a later addition.

On folio 1b, there is an impression of the seal of Qiwam al-Din Muhammad al-Husayni, which is dated AH 1072 (AD 1661–2); folio 2b bears an impression of the seal of Crown Prince Muhammad Hasan Mirza, pretender to the Qajar throne.



83 recto

83
Single folio
Isfahan, Ramadan AH 383 (October–November AD 993)

23.9×33.8 cm, with 4 lines to the page
Material A thin, brittle, polished, deep cream paper, laid, with 7–8 lines to the centimetre
Text area 11.9×24.8 cm
Script Style NS.I
Accession no. KFQ90
Published Sotheby's, London, 14 December 1987, lot no.197, and 26 April 1990, lot no.139

Other fragments from the same Qur'an
Istanbul, Museum of Turkish & Islamic Arts, MSS.453–6 (Déroche 1988, pp.24–7 and fig.6); Sotheby's, London, 13 October 1989, lot no.76

This folio was once part of the last volume of a four-part Qur'an. It is particularly striking for a number of reasons: the impressive size of the script (each line is 4 cm high), the rich illumination, the unusual choice of the horizontal format for a manuscript made of paper, and the original form of NS.I in which it is written. The originality of the script may be observed in a number of letter forms. In this manuscript, the lower return in the independent form of *alif* is almost perpendicular to the shaft of the letter, while in most other examples it is tilted downwards. At the same time, the



83 verso

copyist did not hesitate to give final *nūn* and related letters a vertical body that projects boldly below the line, whereas others usually tried to integrate these letter forms into the horizontal movement of the script. Very curiously, curves appear where we would have expected geometric forms: medial *'ayn* is heart-shaped, for example, and *ṣād/ḍād* could not be closer to the form found in cursive scripts. The calligrapher sometimes used *mashq*, perhaps taking advantage of the format of the manuscript.

The folio in the Khalili Collection contains *Sūrat al-najm* (LIII), verse 59, to *Sūrat al-qamar* (LIV), verse 5. The text is written in black ink, with diacritical strokes; the dots are later additions. Red dots indicate the vocalization. The orthoepics were probably added in two stages, as there are both green and blue *shaddahs* and green and red *hamzahs*.

Individual verses are punctuated by 3.1.2 devices, while the end of a group of ten verses is marked in the margin by a 1.D.II roundel, with the number of verses written out in gold on a red ground in what is probably a form of D script. The *sajdah* at the end of *Sūrat al-najm* is written within an illuminated lozenge. The title and verse count of *Sūrat al-qamar* are written in gold script (possibly D) on a hatched gold ground. They are set in the larger central compartment of a decorative band in three parts, between two bands of interlinked hook-shaped motifs. At either side, there are two square compartments inscribed with a lozenge. An almost lozenge-shaped vignette projects into the margin, and the whole composition is surrounded by a blue fillet.

84
Fragments of a 7-part Qur'an
11th century AD

122 folios (folio 1 is a modern blank), 36.5×23.8 cm, with 8 lines to the page
Material A hard, thick paper, laid, with 7–8 lines to the centimetre
Text area 27.2×18 cm, except on folios 3b–4b, where it is 25.5×18 cm
Script Style NS.I
Accession nos QUR89 (folios 1–10) and QUR89A (folios 11–122)
Published Christie's 16 June 1987, lot no.77 (QUR89 only)
Comparative item Mashhad, Astan-i Quds Library, MS.4316 (Lings 1976, p.18, pl.11)

These pages once belonged to the first, sixth and seventh parts of a seven-part Qur'an that was clearly an impressive manuscript. The script is remarkable for its size, each line being roughly 4 cm high. This presented the calligrapher (or calligraphers) with a considerable challenge, and his (or their) technical skills were not always good enough to meet it. Lapses occur mainly in the upstrokes; it is not unusual to find *alif*s with an irregularly drawn shaft, for instance. There are also problems with the placing of what we consider to be the forerunner of the *tarwīs.* In general, the script is close to that of a manuscript in Mashhad dated AH466 (AD1073–4; Astan-i Quds Library, MS.4316), although it is somewhat cruder. The calligraphy is quite homogeneous, except for a variation in the ending of final *mīm*, but the evidence of the illumination suggests that more than one copyist was involved in the production of the manuscript (see below).

The material in the Khalili Collection is unequally drawn from the three parts. It includes an illuminated opening page and the following parts of the text: *Sūrat al-fātiḥah* (I), verse 1, to *Sūrat al-baqarah* (II), verse 7 (folios 2b–3); *Sūrat al-baqarah*, verses 13–19 (folio 4) and 54–74 (folios 5–10); *Sūrat al-fatḥ* (XLVIII), verses 17–29 (folios 11–16); *Sūrat al-ḥujurāt* (XLIX), verses 3–7 (folio 17); *Sūrat al-ḥujurāt,* verse 13, to *Sūrat al-ṭūr* (LII), verse 37 (folios 18–35); *Sūrat al-najm* (LIII), verse 32, to *Sūrat al-Raḥmān* (LV), verse 60 (folios 36–48); *Sūrat al-wāqi'ah* (LVI), verse 44, to the heading of *Sūrat al-mujādalah* (LVIII; folios 49–61); *Sūrat al-mujādalah*, verses 4–12 (folios 62–4); *Sūrat al-ḥashr* (LIX), verses 9–12 (folio 65); *Sūrat al-jum'ah* (LXII), verse 1, to *Sūrat al-Ḥāqqah* (LXIX), verse 19 (folios 66–95);*Sūrat Nūḥ* (LXXI), verse 1, to *Sūrat al-mursalāt* (LXXVII), verse 47 (folios 96–119); *Sūrat al-nabā'* (LXXVIII), verses 13–28 (folio 120); *Sūrat al-nāzi'āt* (LXXIX), verses 14–30 (folio 121); *Sūrat Quraysh* (CVI), verse 1, to the heading for *Sūrat al-kawthar* (CVIII; folio 122). The text is written in black ink, with diacritical strokes. The vowel signs, which have their modern form, are written in red. The orthoepic signs also have their modern form but have retained the colour of the dots used in earlier manuscripts: green for *hamzah* and *waṣlah*, blue for *shaddah,* and yellow for *sukūn*.

Individual verses are punctuated by a 4.A.II ornament, with the number of the verse written out in gold in a script close to NS.I. The ground of the ornament usually varies from red to green to blue, but in some cases it is merely hatched. In the first part of the manuscript (folios 2b–10), the petals of the verse markers are smaller than in the remainder, where every tenth verse is followed by the same type of marker, with a letter indicating the number of verses in the *abjad* system. A larger 3.D.II illumination in the margin gives the number of verses written out in gold script on a red, green or blue ground. A stylized *hā'* shape, which is usually in gold but is sometimes illuminated (see folio 103a), is set into the text after each group of five verses. It is complemented by a 3.D.II roundel in the margin. These roundels have a truncated base and a pointed top, and they contain the word *khams* ('five') in gold NS script on a red, green or blue ground.

The surah titles and verse counts are written in gold NS.I script on the coloured ground of a decorative band. The designs of the frames and grounds of these bands vary, but they are all accompanied by a vignette in the margin; these are mostly circular. The place of revelation is recorded below the vignette, and divisions of the text other than sevenths are also given in the margin.

The quires seem to consist of three bifolios.



84 folio 2a



84 folios 2b–3a



فاتحة الكتاب سبع ايات
بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
الحمد لله رب العلمين الرحمن
الرحيم ملك يوم الدين ايا
ك نعبد واياك نستعين
اهدنا الصرط المستقيم
صرط الذين انعمت عليهم
غير المغضوب عليهم ولا

This was rather an unusual arrangement in the Eastern Islamic world, but it is known from a number of manuscripts on parchment from the Maghrib. The ruling was done with a dry point on the open central bifolio. The two halves were thus ruled at the same time in folios 2–10 and 17–122; each of the remaining folios was ruled separately. Together with the variations in the illumination, this indicates that two calligraphers worked on the preparation of the seven volumes. A third piece of evidence is provided by the paper, for the laid lines in the paper used for folios 11–16 are clearly visible, while in the paper used for the other folios they cannot always be seen. It seems that the bifolios were made of two sheets glued together, as is often the case in early manuscripts on paper.

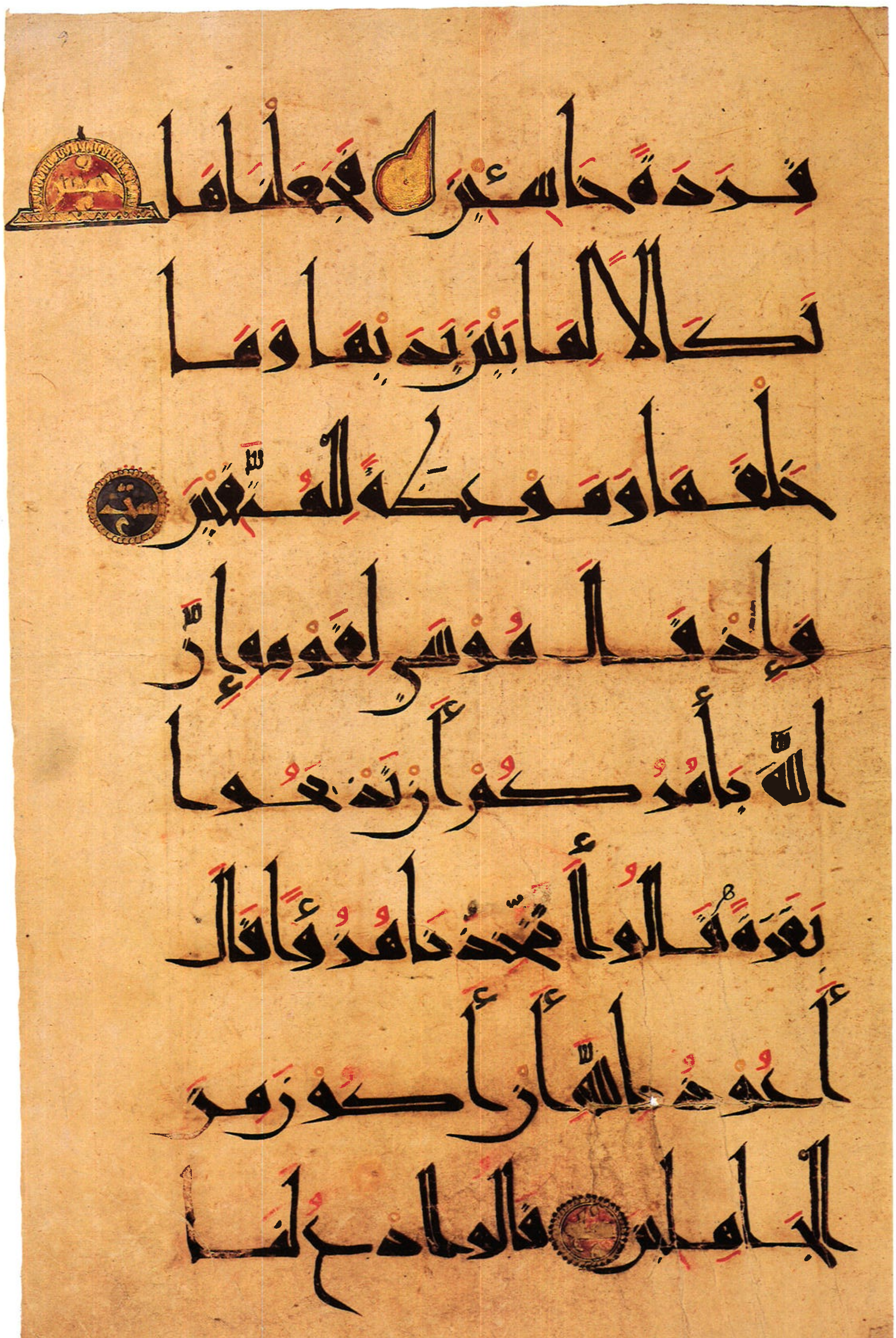
This Qur'an was richly illuminated. The available evidence suggests that each volume had an illuminated double-page frontispiece and finispiece. Half of the frontispiece of Part 1 has survived (folio 2a): it consists of the second part of a table of the components of the Qur'an – that is, the words, letters, diacritical dots and so on. The field has been divided into a chessboard pattern of six horizontal rows of three squares and is surrounded by two bands of interlace. In each of the squares, the number of words, letters or dots is given in NS script. In the central column, the script is in gold on a ground hatched in brown or sepia ink, and there are leaves or illuminations which resemble the verse markers. In the two outer columns, the script is reserved on a red and gold, green and gold, or blue and gold ground with a vaguely vegetal design. The medial vignette is similar to types used in manuscripts of earlier periods. A *basmalah* has been added above the table.

The next double page (folios 2b–3a) contains the beginning of the text, *Sūrat al-fātiḥah* and the first verses of *Sūrat al-baqarah.* The layout suggests a certain clumsiness on the part of the calligrapher, who was unable to finish the text of *Sūrat al-fātiḥah* at the bottom of folio 2b and had to write the last word on folio 3a, but this did not affect the overall design of the illumination, whether or not it was carried out by the calligrapher. There is a slight imbalance between the two pages. Firstly, the bands at the top are not fully symmetrical, as the band on folio 3a contains the last word of *Sūrat al-fātiḥah* as well as the title of *Sūrat al-baqarah.* This is written in gold, while the heading of *Sūrat al-fātiḥah* is reserved against the gold ground. Secondly, the illumination in the outer margins consists of two vertical rectangles on folio 2b, but there is only one on folio 3a. Each rectangle has an *ansa* at the top and contains information about the surah and its place in the Qur'an.

The next full-page illumination is at the end of Part 6 (folio 15b–16a). The text, reduced to four lines to a page instead of eight, is written at the centre of the composition and is surrounded by gold strapwork. Above and below the text there is a wide illuminated band divided into three rectangles. These are decorated with chessboard designs of different sizes, the blue and white squares of the central rectangle being larger than the gold and black squares of the other two. This composition seems to have been inspired by illumination of an earlier period. On folio 16b, an almond-shaped design has been sketched out in black ink.

Like the verse markers and vignettes, the illumination varies slightly from one part of the manuscript to another. This variation can also be observed in the patterns used for the backgrounds of larger compositions: lattice patterns or horizontal hatching in the first part, oblique hatching in the rest.

The material from the last part of the manuscript preserved in the Khalili Collection provides evidence of the close relationship between calligrapher and illuminator, who was often the same person. On folio 38a, for instance, the last two words of *Sūrat al-najm* are in blue ink and have been written one above the other in the middle of the page; they were thus incorporated, along with the *sajdah* ornament, in the illuminated band at the beginning of *Sūrat al-qamar.* For this purpose, the band was divided into three square compartments. The end of *Sūrat al-najm* occupies the central square, while the other two contain the title and the verse count of the following surah, which are reserved on the red and gold ground. The result is a fascinating balance between the text, which is arranged in three lines above and below the illumination, and the decoration itself.


قردة خاسئين فجعلناها
نكالا لما بين يديها وما
خلفها وموعظة للمتقين
وإذ قال موسى لقومه إن
الله يأمركم أن تذبحوا
بقرة قالوا أتتخذنا هزوا قال
أعوذ بالله أن أكون من
الجاهلين قالوا ادع لنا

84 folio 9a


فاستغلظ
فاستوى على سوقه
يعجب الزراع
ليغيظ بهم الكفار

 folio 15b



 folio 38a



 folio 122a


مكية

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
يا أيها المزمل قم الليل إلا
قليلا نصفه أو انقص
منه قليلا أو زد عليه و
رتل القرآن ترتيلا إنا سنلقي
عليك قولا ثقيلا إن نا
شئة الليل هي أشد وطا

84 folio 103b

85
Qur'an fragment
11th or 12th century AD

30 folios, 15.7×10.8 cm, with 11 lines to the page
Material A buff paper, laid, with 7–8 lines to the centimetre; the lines are perpendicular to the spine
Text area 11×8 cm
Script NS.I
Binding Recent
Accession no. QUR105

This manuscript was probably part of a multi-volume Qur'an: the beginning corresponds roughly with the start of the third seventh (at VII, 170), and the end falls near the middle of the same seventh (at X, 60). The script shows a tendency to accentuate the contrast between thick and thin characteristic of the NS script (see final *nūn* and *yā'* in particular). *Lām-alif* has a closed shape, in which the *tarwīs* are set opposite one another. In other cases, the shape of the *tarwīs* varies from a triangle to a hook. Interestingly, the lower salient of the final *alif* is sometimes omitted.

The fragment comprises *Sūrat al-a'rāf* (VII), verses 191–205 (folios 1–2); *Sūrat al-anfāl* (VIII), verses 4–10 (folio 3), 15–32 (folios 4–6) and 37–49 (folios 7–9); *Sūrat al-tawbah* (IX), verses 34–44 (folios 10–12), 68–92 (folios 13–18), 96–105 (folios 19–20) and 109–28 (folios 21–5); and *Sūrat Yūnus* (X), verses 4–13 (folios 26–7) and 28–44 (folios 28–30). The text is written in black ink, with diacritical dots. Red dots indicate the vocalization. *Shaddah* is in green. Small rosettes (3.1.1) in yellow, green and red mark the end of every verse. Every fifth verse is indicated by a very simple 3.C.II illumination in red and yellow, with the word *khams* ('five') in white New Style script on a green ground; a slightly different kind of 3.C.II illumination, with the word *'asharah* ('ten'), marks the end of every tenth verse.

The recent black leather covers have no flap. They are set with two finely finished and gilded panels of stamped leather whose design of floral arabesques and small birds suggests that they date from the 16th century or later. One panel is very worn. The plain doublures are of brownish-red leather.

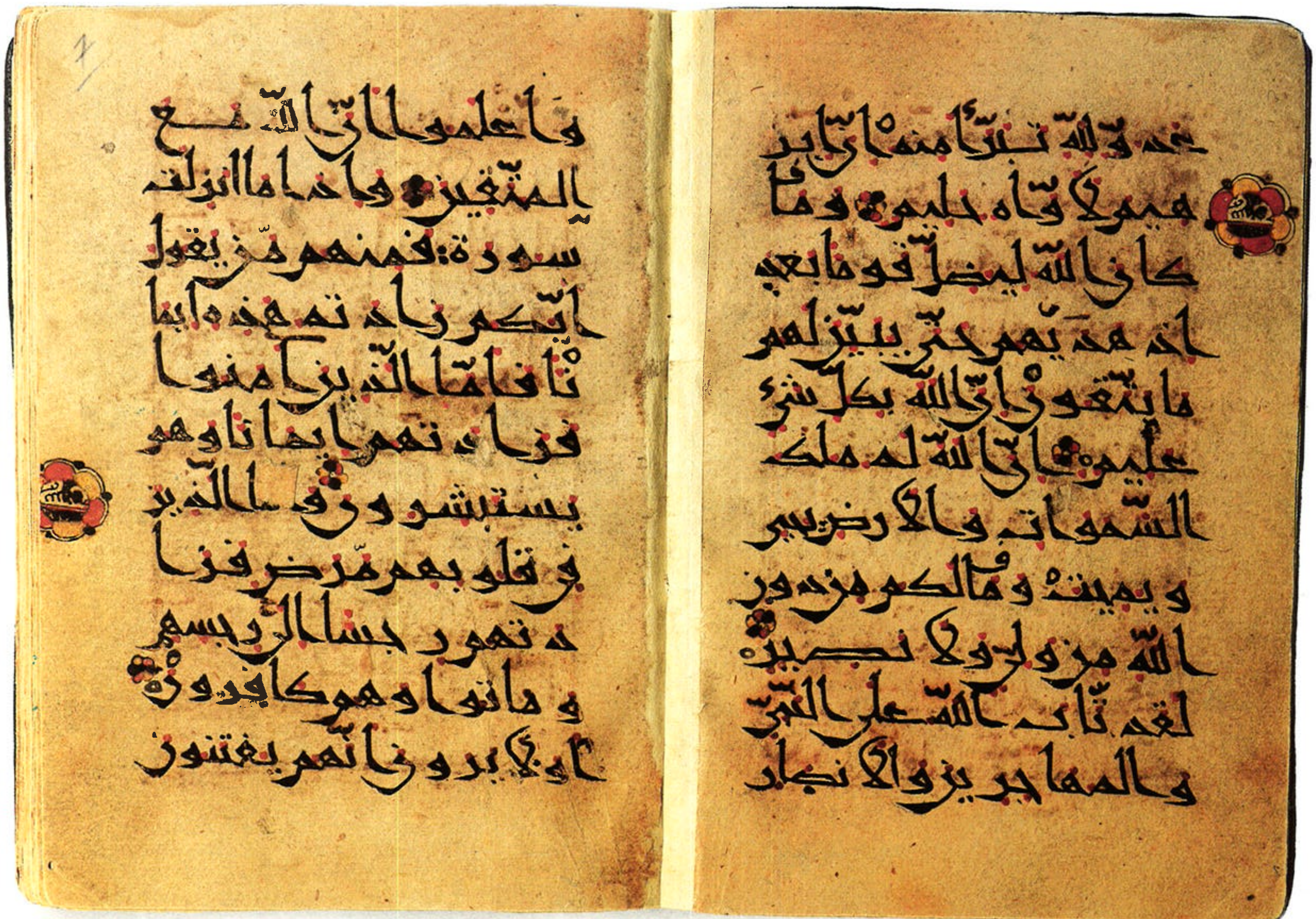
86
Part 2 of a 30-part Qur'an
11th or 12th century AD

102 folios, 14.3×10 cm, with 5 lines to the page
Material A buff paper, laid, with 5–6 lines to the centimetre; the lines are parallel to the spine
Text area 8.1×6.2 cm
Script NS.I
Binding Contemporary, restored
Accession no. QUR155

The scribe of this manuscript adopted some features of NS.III into his NS.I hand. In medial *hā'*, for example, one can almost detect the *tracé* of the pen. The same is true for *lām-alif* and *jīm*, where the right-hand part of the oblique line is curved. However, this last feature could also be seen as evidence of mannerism, as in the script of cat.92. The majority of the quires are formed of five bifolios; there are three exceptions: two are formed of four bifolios, while the last quire is formed of fourteen folios.

The number of the section (*juz'*) is indicated on folio 1a. The text –*Sūrat al-baqarah* (II), verses 142–252– is written in black ink, with many diacritical strokes. The vocalization is indicated by red dots. Orthoepics of the modern type have been added. A 3.A.II device in the margin marks the end of every tenth verse. On each of the two opening pages (folios 1b–2a), an illuminated band with a vignette extending into the margin occupies the upper part of the text area. In each, a pattern of spearheads, framed by a gold fillet, runs towards the vignette, which echoes this movement to some extent; plant-based designs fill the ground.

The covers are old and may have formed the original binding. They have been remounted on new boards, and a new flap has been added during the restoration, but they still offer an interesting example of the designs and techniques used in bookbinding in the 11th and 12th centuries AD. The frame consists of three pairs of fillets, executed rather awkwardly with a point. The central ornament of the field is a circle 1.9 cm in diameter, for which two tools were used alternately – there are eight impressions in all. The first tool is a rosette 0.5 cm in diameter, while the second is a circle with a three-line inscription: *Allāh... 'Alī*. On the upper cover, it is possible to see where the leather thongs used to keep the volume closed were attached.



85 folios 6b–7a



86 folios 1b–2a



87 folios 133b–134a

87
Qur'an fragment
12th century AD

177 folios, 12.5×8 cm, with 22 lines to the page
Material A heavy buff paper, laid, with 4–5 lines to the centimetre; the lines are parallel to the spine
Text area 8.6×5.7 cm
Script Style NS.I
Binding Later reddish-brown leather covers decorated with rosettes blind-tooled along the edges and in a cruciform pattern in the centre; there is no flap, and the spine has been restored
Accession no. QUR124

One original feature of the script of this manuscript is the impression of horizontality created by the moderate use of *mashq* and the stress laid on the base line (see the treatment of final *nūn*, for example); another is the writing of the *basmalah* in a New Style script larger than than that employed for the rest of the text. The construction of the manuscript conforms to standard practice: most of the quires are of five bifolios, but quires of six can also be found.

The text consists of *Sūrat al-baqarah* (II), verse 1, to *Sūrat al-ḥijr* (XV), verse 88 (folios 1–81, 85, 94–102); *Sūrat al-naḥl* (XVI), verses 27–56 (folio 83); *Sūrat al-isrā'* (XVII), verses 85–111 (folio 84); *Sūrat al-kahf* (XVII), verse 24, to *Sūrat al-Raḥmān* (LV), verse 45 (folios 82, 88–90, 86–7, 91–3, 103–74); *Sūrat al-munāfiqūn* (LXIII), verse 4, to *Sūrat al-ṭalāq* (LXV), verse 12 (folios 175–6); and *Sūrat al-mursalāt* (LXXVII), verse 9, to *Sūrat al-nabā'* (LXXVIII), verse 40 (folio 177). It is written in black, with diacritical dots. Red dots indicate the vocalization. Individual verses are punctuated by a small circular marker. A gold Kufic *hā'* indicates the groups of five verses, while a gold circle (I.A.I) marks the end of every tenth verse. *Sajdahs* are indicated in the margin by elaborate roundels with the word *sajdah* written in gold. Surah titles and verse counts are written in gold NS.I, outlined in ink.

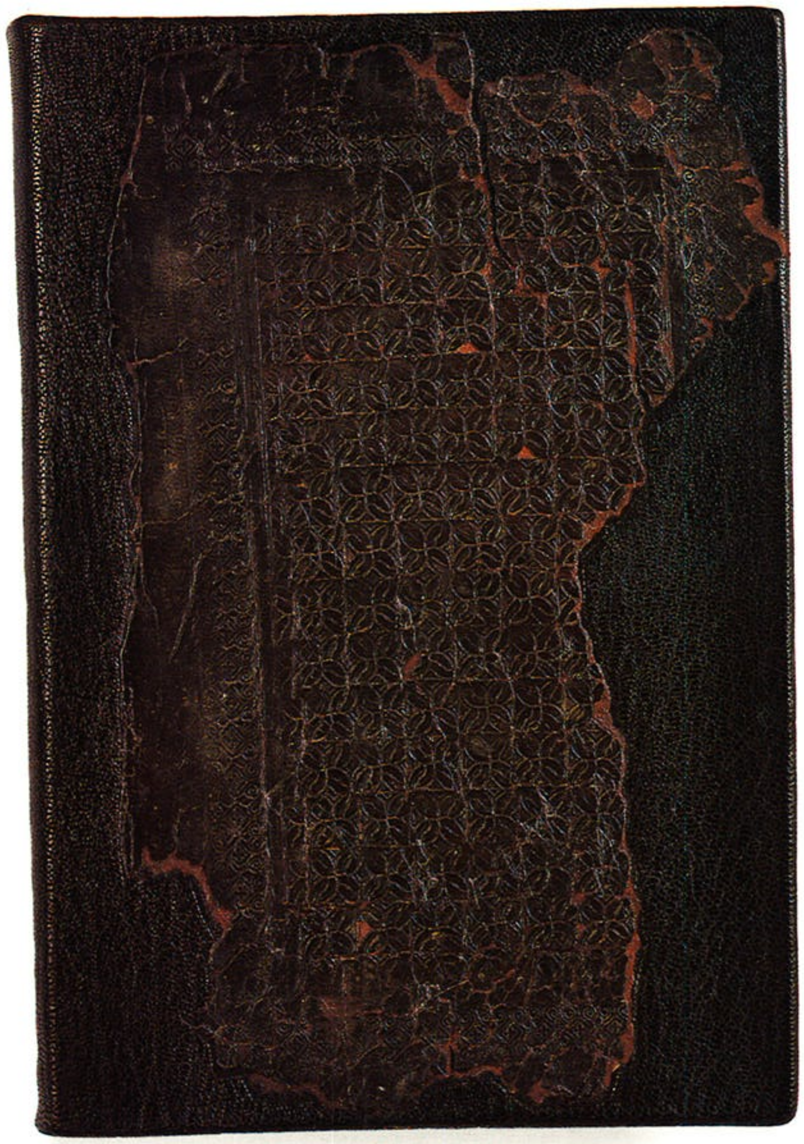
On folio 1a, a small part of the illumination at the beginning of *Sūrat al-baqarah* has been preserved. The page seems to have been divided into three panels by a frame of gold interlace. The top panel has totally disappeared but probably contained the surah title; in the central panel, the first word (*bi'smi…*) of the *basmalah* has been written in floriated script in very dark blue on a white ground; and the bottom panel contains the first verses. On folio 90a, the title of *Sūrat Maryam*, which marks the beginning of the second half of the Qur'anic text according to some traditions, is written in white script D on a red ground within a decorative band which is surrounded by a gold interlace pattern; the *basmalah* itself is written in gold letters in a style intermediate between D and NS. This illumination is complemented by a vignette in the margin.



87 folios 156b–157a



87 folios 89b–90a



88 outer rear cover

88
Part 21 of a 30-part Qur'an
12th century AD

76 folios, 16.4 × 11 cm, with
5 lines to the page
Material A buff paper, laid, with 5–6 lines to the centimetre; the lines are parallel to the spine
Text area 8.8 × 6.5 cm
Script Style NS.I
Binding Contemporary
Accession no. QUR150

The script of this manuscript falls within the mainstream of style NS.I and shows none of the mannerism characteristic of other examples from this period, such as cat.93.

There are some lacunae in the text, which comprises *Sūrat al-'ankabūt* (XXIX), verses 46–49 (folios 1–2), *Sūrat al-'ankabūt,* verse 58, to *Sūrat al-sajdah* (XXXII), verse 28 (folios 3–66), and *Sūrat al-aḥzāb* (XXXIII), verses 3–18 (folios 67–76). The text is written in black ink, with diacritical dots in black, some of which are later additions. The vocalization is indicated by red dots. Orthoepics, which are of the modern type, are written in black ink. A rosette (3.1.2) marks the end of every verse. A spearhead-shaped device, set vertically in the margin and outlined in blue, indicates the end of every fifth verse. The surah titles and verse counts are written in gold NS.I, outlined in red. The same spearhead-shaped ornament, realigned on the horizontal, is used as a vignette in the margin.

The covers are of dark brown leather over cardboard and have suffered some damage; the flap has been lost. They are decorated with blind tooling. Before the tooling was executed, the leather was ruled with the outlines of the frame and of the central field (12 × 6 cm), which is divided into little squares roughly 0.8 × 0.8 cm. Each square is decorated with a cross pattern made up of four oval shapes bisected by an undulating line. The field is separated from the frame by fillets. The frame consists of a plain outer band and an inner band roughly 0.9 cm wide, which is decorated with a succession of little crosses, each inscribed in a pointed square set between two brackets. The spine is reinforced by thick cloth on to which



88 folios 55b–56a

the head and tail of the text block have been stitched. This cloth is covered on the inside by paper, possibly half a quire. The doublures are covered in green silk, the edges of which are hidden by the leather of the binding.

The outer binding preserves a type of decoration current in earlier full-page illumination, in which the field was divided into small squares or lozenges. However, the size of the tools used for the decoration is considerably smaller than in earlier examples, and the detail is much greater. These covers provide evidence of another major change in the manufacture of bindings, namely the replacement of wooden boards by pasteboard.

During the restoration of the binding, some of the sheets of paper from which the boards had been made were removed. Most of these bear a Persian text written in a cursive hand, but one contains a section of the Qur'anic text written in the same style as cat.88. This and a number of other factors – the text area has the same dimensions; there are five lines to the page; and the text is the same as that on folio 13a of the manuscript but has been struck through – suggest that it was originally intended that this leaf should form part of the text block. It seems that the scribe completed the text on the recto but then found the verso of the leaf to be in too poor a condition to be written on. He therefore struck through the text and began again on a new sheet, and the discarded leaf was used in the manufacture of the pasteboard for the binding. If nothing else, this proves that the binding of this Qur'an section is contemporary with the main body of the manuscript.

It should also be noted that the text on the discarded leaf has diacriticals but no vocalization, orthoepics or illumination. This is clear evidence that these were added at a later stage.



89 folio 17a

89

Qur'an fragment
11th or 12th century AD

129 folios, 19×15.8 cm,
with 7 lines to the page
Material A hard, thin, buff paper, laid, with 6–7 lines to the centimetre; the lines are perpendicular to the spine
Text area 12.8×11.6 cm
Script Style NS.I
Binding Modern
Accession no. QUR253

Some of the many Qur'ans in NS.I were executed by poorly skilled calligraphers, as is the case with this fragment, which contains *Sūrat al-aʿrāf* (VII), verse 157, to *Sūrat Hūd* (XI), verse 11 (folios 1–121), and *Sūrat Hūd*, verses 54–87 (folios 122–9). The text is written in black ink, with diacritical strokes. The vocalization, which is modern, and some of the orthoepics are in red. Yellow dots mark the end of every verse, while the end of every tenth verse is indicated by a 3.A.II ornament, with the number of verses written out in gold New Style script on a red ground. The title and verse count of every surah are written in gold NS script, outlined in ink. The end of the second seventh of the text (VII, verse 170) is marked on folio 7a in gold New Style script. At folio 17a, a *sajdah* is indicated by an unusual form of illumination, a square interlaced with a quatrefoil.

90

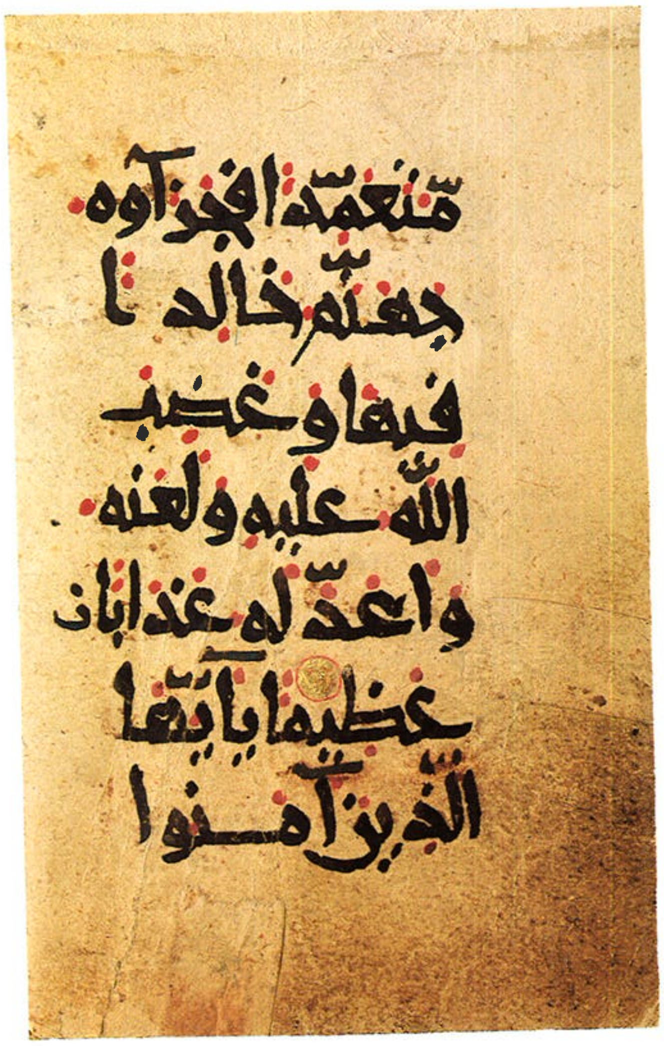
Single folio
11th or 12th century AD

28×18 cm, with 22 lines to the page
Material A thin, brittle, buff paper, laid, with 4–5 lines to the centimetre; the lines are parallel to the spine
Text area 23.3×14.5 cm
Script Style NS.I
Accession no. KFQ73

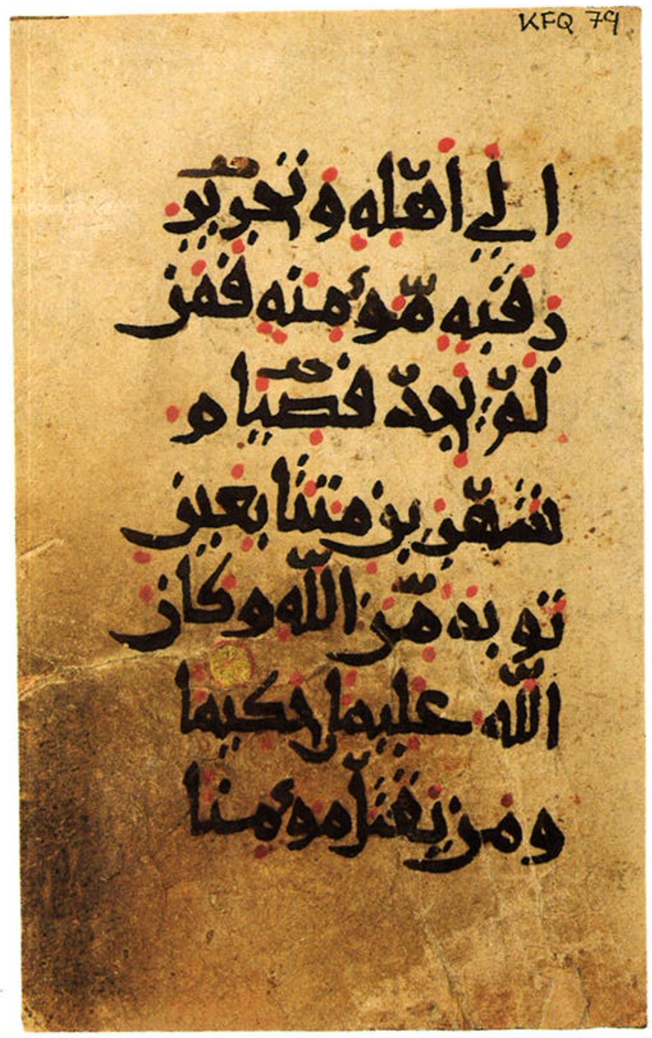
Style NS.I appears here in a form whose simplicity reflects the popularity and wide diffusion of the style. The text – *Sūrat al-baqarah* (II), verse 277, to *Sūrat āl ʿImrān* (III), verse 4 – is written in black ink, with diacritical dots and strokes. Red dots indicate the vocalization, while the *shaddah*, which has its modern shape, is written in ink. A 3.A.II device in the margin marks the end of a group of ten verses. The title of surah III is written in NS script outlined in ink.


فسوق بكم واتقوا الله ويعلمكم الله والله
بكل شيء عليم وان كنتم على سفر ولم تجدوا كا
تبا فرهان مقبوضة فان امن بعضكم بعضا فليؤد
الذي اوتمن امانته وليتق الله ربه ولا تكتموا
الشهادة ومن يكتمها فانه اثم قلبه والله بما تعملو
ن عليم لله ما في السموت وما في الارض وان تبدوا
ما في انفسكم او تخفوه يحاسبكم به الله فيغفر
لمن يشاء ويعذب من يشاء والله على كل شيء قدير
امن الرسول بما انزل اليه من ربه والمومنون كل امن
بالله وملئكته وكتبه ورسله لا نفرق بين احد
من رسله وقالوا سمعنا واطعنا غفرانك ربنا
واليك المصير لا يكلف الله نفسا الا وسعها لها
ما كسبت وعليها ما اكتسبت ربنا لا تواخذنا
ان نسينا او اخطانا ربنا ولا تحمل علينا اصرا
كما حملته على الذين من قبلنا ربنا ولا تحملنا ما لا طاقة
لنا به واعف عنا واغفر لنا وارحمنا انت مولىنا
فانصرنا على القوم الكافرين
سورة ال عمرن مايتا اية
بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم الم الله لا اله الا هو الحي
القيوم نزل عليك الكتاب بالحق مصدقا لما
بين يديه وانزل التورية والانجيل من قبل هدى
للناس وانزل الفرقان ان الذين كفروا بايت الله

*90 verso



91 verso



91 recto

91
Single folio
11th century AD

15.7 × 9.7 cm, with 7 lines to the page
Material A thin, hard, polished buff paper, laid, with 6–7 lines to the centimetre; the lines run parallel to the spine
Text area 9.4 × 6.1 cm
Script A style related to NS.III
Accession no. KFQ79

This fragment shows a clumsy attempt at a large-scale NS script, with many irregularities. The text consists of *Sūrat al-nisā'* (IV), verses 92–4. It is written in black ink, with diacritical dots. Red dots indicate the vocalization. Individual verses are marked by a 2.2.2 device outlined in red.

92
Single folio
12th century AD

34.5 × 27.5 cm, with 15 lines to the page
Material A thin, soft, buff paper, laid, with 5–6 lines to the centimetre; the lines run perpendicular to the spine
Text area 26.6 × 24 cm
Script Style NS.I
Accession no. KFQ77

Like cat.93 and 95, this folio exemplifies the tendency towards mannerism seen in later NS.I hands, expressed here by subtle concessions to the cursive: the way that the tails of final *nūn* and *qāf* are rendered shows scant regard for the New Style tradition, for example. The text – *Sūrat al-nūr* (XXIV), verses 11–26– is written in black ink, with diacritical dots. The modern vowel signs are written in ink. *Shaddah* and *sukūn* are in red, while *hamzah* is written in ink. A small red circle indicates the end of every verse, and a 3.A.II medallion marks the end of each group of ten verses.


يعلم وأنتم لا تعلمون ولولا فضل الله عليكم و
رحمته وأن الله رءوف رحيم يا أيها الذين آمنوا لا
تتبعوا خطوات الشيطان ومن يتبع خطوات
الشيطان فإنه يأمر بالفحشاء والمنكر ولولا فضل الله
عليكم ورحمته ما زكى منكم من أحد أبدا ولكن
الله يزكي من يشاء والله سميع عليم ولا يأتل أولوا
الفضل منكم والسعة أن يؤتوا أولي القربى والمسا
كين والمهاجرين في سبيل الله وليعفوا وليصفحوا ألا
تحبون أن يغفر الله لكم والله غفور رحيم إن الذين ير
مون المحصنات الغافلات المؤمنات لعنوا في الدنيا
والآخرة ولهم عذاب عظيم يوم تشهد عليهم
ألسنتهم وأيديهم وأرجلهم بما كانوا يعملون يو
مئذ يوفيهم الله دينهم الحق ويعلمون أن الله هو الحق
المبين الخبيثات للخبيثين والخبيثون للخبيثات و
الطيبات للطيبين والطيبون للطيبات أولئك مبر

 verso



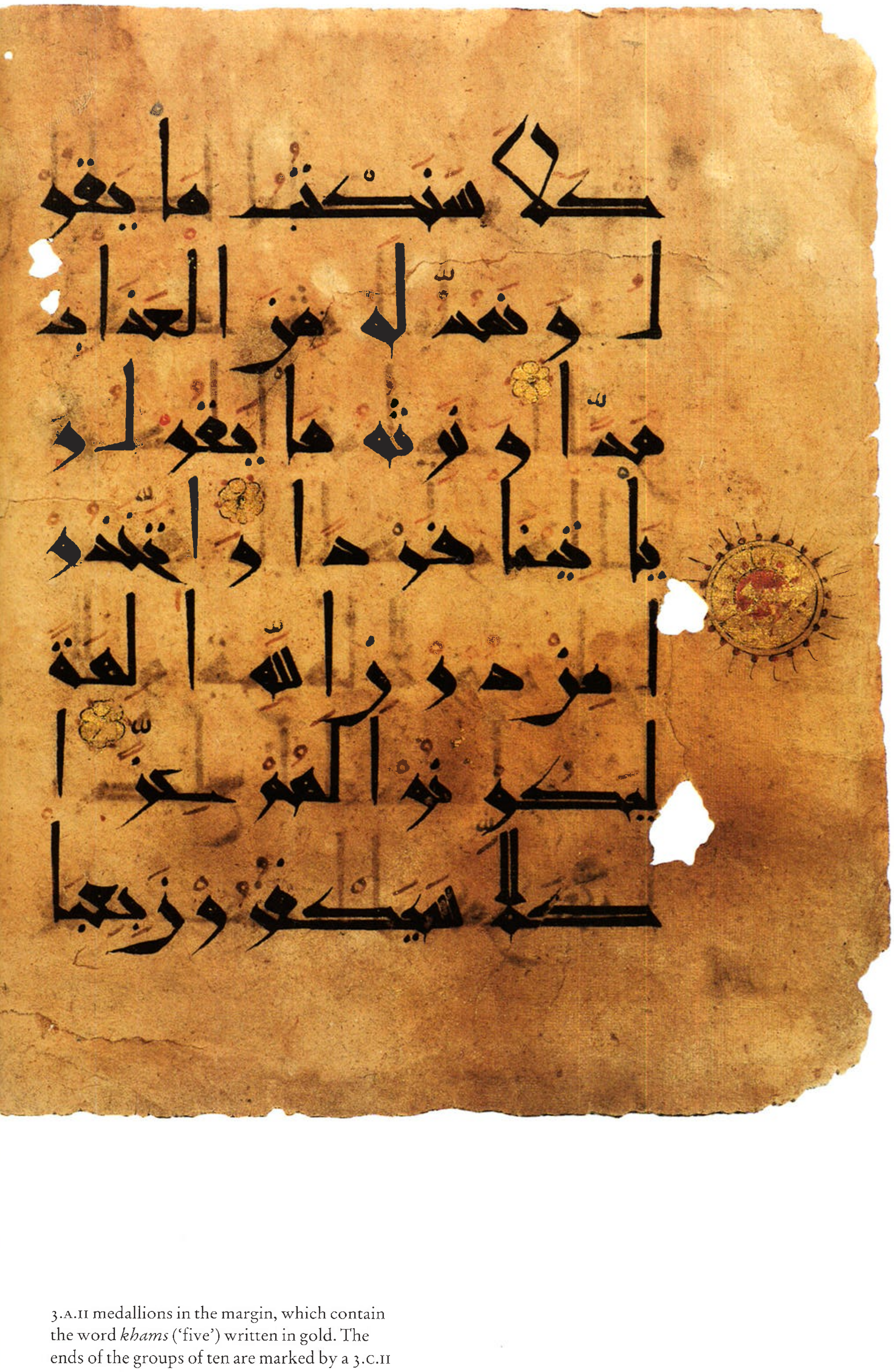
*93 folio 2a, folio 1b

93
Bifolio
11th or 12th century AD

21.5×17.7 cm, with
7 lines to the page
Material A thin, brittle, deep buff paper, laid, with 4–5 lines to the centimetre; the lines run perpendicular to the spine
Text area 13.7×12 cm
Script NS.I
Accession no. KFQ72

This fragment belongs to a later development of NS.I style. Mannerism pervades the script: the letter forms are often contorted and may even include extraneous elements, which suggests a close relationship with epigraphic material. It is possible to find similar forms of *lām-alif*, initial *'ayn*, and *hā'*, which has a short spur at the base of the letter, and the same type of ligatures in dated manuscripts from the end of the 11th century, such as the Qur'an of AH485 (AD1092) in the collection of Aga Mahdi Kashani (Lings 1976, p.18, pls 14–16). However, this fragment should probably be ascribed to the 12th century.

The text consists of *Sūrat Maryam* (XIX), verses 76–82, and *Sūrat ṭā'-hā'* (XX), verses 40–47. It is written in black ink, with diacritical dots. The modern vowel signs are written in red, with the *shaddah* in blue. Individual verses are punctuated by 3.1.2 devices, while the pear-shaped ornaments inserted into the text at the end of each group of five verses are matched by



3.A.II medallions in the margin, which contain the word *khams* ('five') written in gold. The ends of the groups of ten are marked by a 3.C.II device, with the number of verses written out in gold New Style script on a red ground.



*94 recto

94
Single folio
11th or 12th century AD

19.7×14 cm, with 9 lines to the page
Material A buff paper, laid, with 5–6 lines to the centimetre; the lines run perpendicular to the spine
Text area 11.2×9.4 cm
Script Style NS.I
Accession no. KFQ80

The script of this fragment again reflects the mannerism which can be observed in the versions of NS.I produced during the late 11th century and the 12th. The copyist was not as bold – or as skilful – as the scribe responsible for cat.93, and he does not venture too far. Curiously, the shape of *hā'* is very close to the form of the letter in the older NS.III script.

The text –*Sūrat al-Rūm* (XXX), verses 14–18– is written in black ink, with diacritical dots. Red dots indicate the vocalization. The orthoepic signs in brown ink are modern. A yellow dot over three black dots marks the end of every verse. A later illuminated marker for a group of five verses has been glued in the inner margin.

95
Two folios
11th or 12th century AD

29×12.5 cm, with 17 lines to the page
Material A buff laid paper whose details are obscured by the card to which it is glued
Text area 23.3×21.2 cm
Script Style NS.I
Accession no. KFQ74

The first folio contains *Sūrat al-qaṣaṣ* (XXVIII), verses 78–85, and the text of the second runs from *Sūrat al-najm* (LIII), verse 37, to *Sūrat al-qamar* (LIV), verse 4. The text is written in black ink, with diacritical strokes. Red dots indicate the vocalization. *Shaddah*, *sukūn* and *hamzah* have their modern shapes and are written in green. Comma-shaped gold devices mark the end of every verse. Groups of ten verses were probably marked by devices in the margins, which have been heavily trimmed; it is possible that they were the medallions now glued in the upper margin of the second folio and in the lower margin of the first. The title of *Sūrat al-qamar* is written in gold New Style script and outlined in ink.



وابرهيم الذى وفى الا تزر وازرة وزر اخرى وان
ليس للانسان الا ما سعى وان سعيه سوف يرى ثم يجزاه
الجزاء الاوفى وان الى ربك المنتهى وانه هو اضحك
وابكى وانه هو امات واحيا وانه خلق الزوجين
الذكر والانثى من نطفة اذا تمنى وان عليه النشاة
الاخرى وانه هو اغنى واقنى وانه هو رب الشعرى
وانه اهلك عادا الاولى وثمود فما ابقى وقوم
نوح من قبل انهم كانوا هم اظلم واطغى والموتفكة
اهوى فغشاها ما غشى فباى الاء ربك تتمارى
هذا نذير من النذر الاولى ازفت الازفة ليس
لها من دون الله كاشفة افمن هذا الحديث
تعجبون وتضحكون ولا تبكون وانتم سامدون
فاسجدوا لله واعبدوا
بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
اقتربت الساعة وانشق القمر وان يروا اية يعرضوا
ويقولوا سحر مستمر وكذبوا واتبعوا اهواءهم
وكل امر مستقر ولقد جاءهم من الانباء ما فيه مزدجر

*95 folio 2a



*96 folios 119b–120a



*96 folios 145b–146a

96
Single-volume Qur'an
12th century AD

239 folios, 12×9.5cm, with
21 lines to the page
Material A hard, thin, buff paper, laid, with 6–7 lines to the centimetre; the lines run perpendicular to the spine
Text area 9×7.5cm
Script Style NS.I
Binding Recent
Accession no. QUR94

The minute New Style script used for this copy is clear and regular. The manuscript is a good example of a fine but not uncommon type of Qur'an produced during the 12th century. The text is written in black ink, with the vocalization and diacritical dots in black. *Shaddah*, *sukūn* and *waṣlah* are in red. Three black dots (2.1.1) mark the end of most verses, but small red circles are also found. A stylized Kufic *hā'* in the margin or in the text indicates the end of groups of five verses, while groups of ten are marked in the margin by an illumination (3.A.II), and there is usually a small rosette in the text itself. The title and verse count of each surah are written in yellow NS.I, outlined in ink; a note of the place of revelation has been added later, between the title and the *basmalah*. Almond-shaped ornaments with an interlace pattern appear on folios 237 and 238 in connection with the surah titles. The conventional divisions of the Qur'anic text are indicated in the margin by the name of the division written in yellow NS.I, but the end of the first seventh is indicated in the text itself.

The first folio and the last have been lost, and the text that appeared on them–surah I to surah II, verse 3, and surahs CXI–CXIV –have been redone. The first two pages of text were illuminated, but only the left-hand page (folio 2a) survives. On this page, the text lies between two decorative bands which consist of a rectangular panel set between two squares. In the upper rectangle, part of the verse count of *Sūrat al-baqarah* has been written in yellow NS script on a red ground, while the lower rectangle contains an arabesque in the same colours. The four squares are decorated with a yellow interlace on a red ground.

The quires are mainly made with five bifolios but occasionally with eight. Folios 2a and 238b bore the impression of the seal of Ja'far ibn Muhammad, but the second impression has been erased. The later outer binding is of red morocco decorated with modest tooling and gilding. The covers, foredge and flap are set with stamped brown leather panels. The plain doublures are of light-brown leather.

97
Single folio
12th century AD

37.5×28.5 cm, with
18 lines to the page
Material A thin, soft, buff paper, laid, with 4–5 lines to the centimetre; the lines run perpendicular to the spine
Text area 26.4×23 cm
Script Style NS.I
Accession no. KFQ76

Among the later variants of NS.I, the hand of cat.97 stands between the mannerism of cat.93 (see *jīm,* for instance) and the more classical version seen in cat.96. As in cat.87, which is from the same period, the *basmalah* is written in a larger script. The script is clumsily executed, the copyist having hesitated over the shape of certain letters (see *alif*) and over the *tarwīs*.

The text–*Sūrat qāf* (L), verses 1–42–is written in black ink, with diacritical dots. The modern vowel and orthoepic signs are also in ink. A 3.1.2 marker indicates the end of every verse. After a group of five verses this has been replaced by a gold Kufic *hā'*, which is complemented in the margin by an elaborate illumination derived from the shape of *hā'*. After every tenth verse a circle (1.D.I) contains the number of verses written out in gold New Style script on a red ground. The title and verse count of *Sūrat qāf,* written in gold New Style script and outlined in ink, are accompanied by a vignette in the margin; the letter *qāf* in the title was originally omitted.

98
Single folio
12th century AD

27.1×20.3 cm, with
23 lines to the page
Material A hard, buff paper, laid, with 4–5 lines to the centimetre
Text area 20.6×14.8 cm
Script Style NS.I
Accession no. KFQ88.3

The script of this folio is an excellent example of NS.I and exemplifies the style's quality of clarity. This type of NS script was in use throughout the 12th century and survived into the early 13th.

The text– verses 22–44 of *Sūrat Sabā'* (XXXIV)–was written in black ink, with diacritical dots. Red dots indicate the vocalization. *Shaddah*, which has its modern shape, is in brown, as is *hamzah,* while *sukūn* is in blue. A comma-shaped device accompanied by a small circle outlined in ink marks the end of every verse, and illuminated devices have been placed in the margin to indicate the ends of groups of five and ten verses. Gold vase-shaped ornaments derived from the Kufic *hā'* were used for groups of five verses; they are outlined in blue. For groups of ten verses, the marker is a circle (1.D.II) with the word *'asharah* written in gold NS script in the centre.


سورة قاف خمس وأربعون آية
بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
ق والقرآن المجيد بل عجبوا أن جاءهم منذر منهم فقال
الكافرون هذا شيء عجيب أإذا متنا وكنا ترابا ذلك
رجع بعيد قد علمنا ما تنقص الأرض منهم وعندنا
كتاب حفيظ بل كذبوا بالحق لما جاءهم فهم في أمر مريج
أفلم ينظروا إلى السماء فوقهم كيف بنيناها وزيناها
وما لها من فروج والأرض مددناها وألقينا فيها رواسي
وأنبتنا فيها من كل زوج بهيج تبصرة وذكرى لكل
عبد منيب ونزلنا من السماء ماء مباركا فأنبتنا به جنات
وحب الحصيد والنخل باسقات لها طلع نضيد رزقا
للعباد وأحيينا به بلدة ميتا كذلك الخروج كذبت
قبلهم قوم نوح وأصحاب الرس وثمود وعاد وفرعون
وإخوان لوط وأصحاب الأيكة وقوم تبع كل كذب
الرسل فحق وعيد أفعيينا بالخلق الأول بل هم في لبس من خلق
جديد ولقد خلقنا الإنسان ونعلم ما توسوس به نفسه و
نحن أقرب إليه من حبل الوريد إذ يتلقى المتلقيان عن اليمين
عتيد وعن الشمال قعيد ما يلفظ من قول إلا لديه رقيب

97 recto



*98 verso

Concordances

Concordance by catalogue number

Cat.1	KFQ60	Cat.24	QUR372	Cat.50	KFQ21	Cat.74	KFQ56
Cat.2	KFQ34	Cat.25	KFQ65	Cat.51	KFQ18	Cat.75	KFQ48
Cat.3	KFQ59	Cat.26	KFQ35	Cat.52	KFQ17	Cat.76	KFQ40
	KFQ61	Cat.27	KFQ1	Cat.53	KFQ39A	Cat.77	KFQ32
Cat.4	KFQ50	Cat.28	KFQ10	Cat.54	KFQ39B	Cat.78	QUR286
Cat.5	KFQ42	Cat.29	KFQ8	Cat.55	KFQ69	Cat.79	KFQ26
	KFQ62	Cat.30	KFQ12	Cat.56	KFQ51	Cat.80	QUR305
Cat.6	KFQ20	Cat.31	KFQ31	Cat.57	KFQ89	Cat.81	QUR261
Cat.7	KFQ27	Cat.32	KFQ29	Cat.58	KFQ91		QUR368
Cat.8	KFQ28	Cat.33	KFQ36	Cat.59	QUR306	Cat.82	QUR430
Cat.9	KFQ13 & 14	Cat.34	KFQ37	Cat.60	KFQ4	Cat.83	KFQ90
Cat.10	QUR48	Cat.35	KFQ43	Cat.61	KFQ24	Cat.84	QUR89
	QUR80	Cat.36	KFQ22	Cat.62	KFQ16	Cat.85	QUR105
Cat.11	KFQ93	Cat.37	KFQ41	Cat.63	KFQ30	Cat.86	QUR155
Cat.12	KFQ15	Cat.38	KFQ6	Cat.64	KFQ5	Cat.87	QUR124
Cat.13	KFQ33	Cat.39	QUR69	Cat.65	KFQ3	Cat.88	QUR150
Cat.14	KFQ44	Cat.40	KFQ11	Cat.66	KFQ46	Cat.89	QUR253
Cat.15	KFQ19	Cat.41	KFQ52		KFQ47	Cat.90	KFQ73
Cat.16	KFQ63	Cat.42	KFQ53		KFQ71	Cat.91	KFQ79
Cat.17	KFQ45	Cat.43	KFQ25	Cat.67	KFQ78	Cat.92	KFQ77
Cat.18	KFQ57	Cat.44	KFQ82	Cat.68	KFQ70	Cat.93	KFQ72
Cat.19	KFQ84	Cat.45	QUR49	Cat.69	KFQ54	Cat.94	KFQ80
Cat.20	KFQ67	Cat.46	QUR285	Cat.70	KFQ58	Cat.95	KFQ74
Cat.21	KFQ68	Cat.47	KFQ7	Cat.71	KFQ49	Cat.96	QUR94
Cat.22	KFQ64	Cat.48	KFQ2	Cat.72	KFQ9	Cat.97	KFQ76
Cat.23	KFQ55	Cat.49	KFQ38	Cat.73	KFQ81	Cat.98	KFQ88.3

Concordance by accession number

KFQ1	Cat.27	KFQ29	Cat.32	KFQ55	Cat.23	KFQ88.3	Cat.98
KFQ2	Cat.48	KFQ30	Cat.63	KFQ56	Cat.74	KFQ89	Cat.57
KFQ3	Cat.65	KFQ31	Cat.31	KFQ57	Cat.18	KFQ90	Cat.83
KFQ4	Cat.60	KFQ32	Cat.77	KFQ58	Cat.70	KFQ91	Cat.58
KFQ5	Cat.64	KFQ33	Cat.13	KFQ59	Cat.3	KFQ93	Cat.11
KFQ6	Cat.38	KFQ34	Cat.2	KFQ60	Cat.1		
KFQ7	Cat.47	KFQ35	Cat.26	KFQ61	Cat.3		
KFQ8	Cat.29	KFQ36	Cat.33	KFQ62	Cat.5		
KFQ9	Cat.72	KFQ37	Cat.34	KFQ63	Cat.16	QUR48	Cat.10
KFQ10	Cat.28	KFQ38	Cat.49	KFQ64	Cat.22	QUR49	Cat.45
KFQ11	Cat.40	KFQ39A	Cat.53	KFQ65	Cat.25	QUR69	Cat.39
KFQ12	Cat.30	KFQ39B	Cat.54	KFQ67	Cat.20	QUR80	Cat.10
KFQ13	Cat.9	KFQ40	Cat.76	KFQ68	Cat.21	QUR89	Cat.84
KFQ14	Cat.9	KFQ41	Cat.37	KFQ69	Cat.55	QUR94	Cat.96
KFQ15	Cat.12	KFQ42	Cat.5	KFQ70	Cat.68	QUR105	Cat.85
KFQ16	Cat.62	KFQ43	Cat.35	KFQ71	Cat.66	QUR124	Cat.87
KFQ17	Cat.52	KFQ44	Cat.14	KFQ72	Cat.93	QUR150	Cat.88
KFQ18	Cat.51	KFQ45	Cat.17	KFQ73	Cat.90	QUR155	Cat.86
KFQ19	Cat.15	KFQ46	Cat.66	KFQ74	Cat.95	QUR253	Cat.89
KFQ20	Cat.6	KFQ47	Cat.67	KFQ76	Cat.97	QUR261	Cat.81
KFQ21	Cat.50	KFQ48	Cat.75	KFQ77	Cat.92	QUR285	Cat.46
KFQ22	Cat.36	KFQ49	Cat.71	KFQ78	Cat.67	QUR286	Cat.78
KFQ24	Cat.61	KFQ50	Cat.4	KFQ79	Cat.91	QUR305	Cat.80
KFQ25	Cat.43	KFQ51	Cat.56	KFQ80	Cat.94	QUR306	Cat.59
KFQ26	Cat.81	KFQ52	Cat.41	KFQ81	Cat.73	QUR368	Cat.81
KFQ27	Cat.7	KFQ53	Cat.42	KFQ82	Cat.44	QUR372	Cat.24
KFQ28	Cat.8	KFQ54	Cat.69	KFQ84	Cat.19	QUR430	Cat.82

Notes

The Abbasid Tradition (pp.11–25)

1. See David James's introduction to volume II of this catalogue.
2. See, for example, the material collected in al-Munajjid [1971], pp.43–76, especially figs 23, 26, 27 and 30–39.
3. Grohmann 1967, p.41.
4. Adler 1780, pp.10–13. For a history of the study of early Arabic scripts, see Déroche 1980.
5. Silvestre de Sacy 1808, pp.253–4 and notes *p* and *q*, and p.297 and note *t*. The work as a whole was published by Flügel in 1871–2.
6. De Slane 1883–95, particularly p.90.
7. Abbott's work (1939, 1941) illustrates this tendency perfectly. Note also the interesting approach adopted by Schroeder (1937).
8. Abbott 1939, pp.24–8; Safadi 1978, pp.40–41; Vienna 1980, p.43.
9. Schroeder 1937; Levi della Vida 1947.
10. Lings & Safadi 1976.
11. Sourdel & Sourdel 1964, p.1.
12. Marçais & Poinssot 1948, p.11.
13. Puin 1985, p.10; von Bothmer 1987, p.177.
14. Harâtî 1987, pp.480–81.
15. Witkam 1989, p.4.
16. Déroche 1983, p.15.
17. MS.arab.358b; see Déroche 1983, pp.15–16 and no.85.
18. Déroche, forthcoming.
19. Endress 1982, p.173, note 66.
20. Abbott 1939.
21. Schimmel 1982, p.199.
22. Sourdel-Thomine 1978, p.1116.
23. Déroche 1983, pp.15–53.
24. Ibn al-Nadim, p.6.
25. See also Déroche 1989, pp.103–4 and pl.XIIa.
26. Other, less suitable materials were also used in the early years of the Islamic era; see Grohmann 1967, pp.66–117.
27. See, for instance, Roberts & Skeat 1985, pp.75–6; Van Haelst 1989, p.35.
28. Lemaire 1989, pp.46–9.
29. Déroche 1989, pp.107–8.
30. Lemaire 1989, pp.69–94.
31. Déroche 1989, p.108.
32. Endress 1982, p.272.
33. Marçais & Poinssot 1948.
34. Arnold & Grohmann 1929, pp.45–6, note 202 and pl.22a–c; Weisweiler 1962, no.41 and pl.I; Déroche 1986.
35. Marçais & Poinssot 1948, pp.14–15 and fig.1; another explanation, not supported by the facts, is offered at Chicago 1981, pp.55–6.
36. Marçais & Poinssot 1948, pp.17–18 and fig.2; Déroche 1986, *passim*.
37. Déroche 1986, pp.88–9 (no.4). See Lemaire 1989, p. 189, for Western examples.
38. When a *misṭarah* was employed (see volume II of this catalogue, p.15), the lines in relief appeared on the side of the leaf facing the scribe.
39. For western examples, see Lemaire 1989, pp.127–49. We know of only one Maghribi text on this subject; see Sauvan 1989, p.50.
40. Déroche, 1989, p.103 and note 11.
41. Sauvan 1989, p.50.
42. See pp.23, 25 below.
43. Déroche, 1989, pp.102–3; also Déroche, forthcoming.
44. Déroche, 1988, pp.26–7, and also fig. 3 (p.23), where the use of *mashq* was intended to create a particular effect; von Bothmer 1989, especially pp. 46–8 and figs 3–6.
45. Von Bothmer 1987, p.178. Bodies of material that have been assembled as a result of conscious choices, such as that in the Khalili Collection, cannot be counted as representative because they reflect the collector's own taste and interests.
46. Déroche 1989, p.109.
47. Déroche 1983, pp. 27–31 and pl.XXIII.
48. Déroche 1989, pp. 110–11.
49. Jenkins 1985, pp.19–23; von Bothmer 1987b, pp.5–9.
50. James 1988, p.43 and *passim*.
51. These remarks apply only to ruling with a dry point.
52. See, for example, the fragments in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris (Déroche 1983, pp.103–4 and pl.IIa) and in Kairouan (Paris 1982, no.347).
53. See Dublin, Chester Beatty Library, MSS 1406 and 1411 (Arberry 1967, nos 5 and 10; James 1980, nos 6 and 8).
54. See some of the illuminated designs in the Qur'an of 'Abd al-Mun'im in Dublin, Chester Beatty Library, MS.1421 (Arberry 1967, no.16).
55. Pinder-Wilson 1961, p.96.
56. Marçais & Poinssot 1948; Grohmann 1929, pp.30–31; Rice 1955, p.30; Ettinghausen 1977, p.169; and Déroche 1983, pp.160–61.
57. For remarks on the structure and illumination of Hijazi and New Style Qur'ans, see pp.29 and 134–5 below.

The Hijazi Script (pp.27–9)

1. The translation is that proposed by Dodge (Ibn al-Nadim–Dodge, p.10).
2. Dérenbourg 1910; and Abbott 1939.
3. See Grohmann 1971, pp.14–17, for example.
4. Grohmann 1971, pp.28–9; Sourdel-Thomine 1978, p.1119; Endress 1982, p.170.
5. Sourdel-Thomine 1978, p.1120; Endress 1982, p.171.
6. Puin 1985, pp.13–14.
7. Grohmann 1958.
8. See Abbott 1939, pp.9–11.
9. The identification was made by Karabacek (1891, p.324); see also Abbott 1939, pp.23–24. However, it is not certain that *mā'il* ever existed, see Endress 1982, p.173, note 66
10. One wonders whether the sequence given in the *Fihrist* does not have some symbolic value, even if only in part.
11. Blachère 1959, p.87.
12. See above, p.17.
13. See above, p.18.
14. Sellheim 1986, p.204.

The Early Abbasid Scripts (pp.34–42)

1. Silvestre de Sacy 1808, p.309.
2. See von Karabacek 1918, p.11; and Abbott 1939, pp.24–30, for example.
3. See above, p.27.
4. See Abbott 1941, particularly tables I and II (p.90).
5. In the Bibliothèque Nationale collection, D.I fragments are more numerous than examples of B.II, but Asselin de Cherville may have been selective when he made his purchase, and the material in the mosque of 'Amr may not have been representative in the first place.
6. Déroche 1983, pp.37, 65–6 and pl.VIII; Déroche, work in progress. For each type of script, the source of the material will be given (Cairo, Kairouan, Damascus or San'a'), and the reader will be referred either to publications or, in the case of the Damascus material, to our work in progress. None of these four major finds has been fully catalogued, and the location of only part of the Cairo material is known. No references have been made to library manuscripts whose provenance is unknown.
7. Déroche 1983, pp.37, 67 and pl.XII; Déroche, work in progress; Kuwait 1985, no.23.
8. Déroche 1983, pp.38, 68–9 and pl.X; Déroche, work in progress.
9. See, for example, Khoury 1972, I; David-Weill 1939, p.1; and Abbott 1957–72, I, p.2.
10. Grohmann 1971, pp.79–80 and fig.44. For the convenience of the reader, we will refer to this collection rather than to other publications.
11. I am grateful to Miriam Rosen-Ayalon for allowing me to make use of the findings in Rosen-Ayalon, Ben-Tor & Nevo, inscription no.305.
12. Grohmann 1971, Schrifttafel II.
13. Von Karabacek 1918, p.11.
14. Déroche 1983, pp.38–9, 70-74 and pl.XI; Déroche 1989, pp.101–2; Déroche, work in progress; Paris 1982, no. 344; Kuwait 1985, no.61.
15. Déroche 1989, p.102, nos 7 and 8.
16. Moritz 1905, pl.42b; Moritz 1913, p.388
17. Déroche 1983, pp.39–41, 75–83 and pls XII–XVa.
18. Déroche 1983, pp.39–40, 75–80 and pls XII–XIII; Déroche, work in progress; Kuwait 1985, no.38.
19. Grohmann 1971, pl.XII/1.
20. Déroche 1983, p.40, 81 and pl.XIV; Déroche, work in progress.
21. Déroche 1983, pp.40–41, 82–3 and pl.XVa; Déroche, work in progress.

22. Déroche, forthcoming.
23. Déroche 1983, pp.41–2, 84–97 and pl. XVI; Déroche, work in progress; Paris 1982, no.351; Kuwait 1985, no.58.
24. Déroche, work in progress.
25. Moritz 1913, p.388; Déroche 1983b, pp.151–3, 164–5, pls IIb–III, and fig. I; and Déroche, forthcoming.
26. Moritz 1905, pl.41.
27. Déroche 1983b, pp.147–9, pl. I and figs 3–4.
28. Bergsträsser & Pretzl 1936, p.252, no. 2; Déroche 1983b, p.150.
29. Déroche 1983, no.216.
30. Déroche 1983, pp.42, 98–99 and pl.XVb; Paris 1982, no.334.
31. Déroche 1983, pp.42–3, 100–7 and pl. XVIIa; Déroche, work in progress; Paris 1982, no.327; and Kuwait 1985, no.62, which has some affinities to D.III.
32. Shabbuh 1956, p.339 and pl. I below.
33. Déroche 1983b, pl. Ib.
34.
35. Bloom 1986, p.64; 1989, p.98.
36. Déroche 1983, pp.43, 108–111 and pl.XVIII; Déroche, work in progress; Paris 1982, no.350; Kuwait 1985, no.53.
37. Karatay 1962, no.6; Déroche 1983, pp.153–4.
38. Déroche 1983, pp.43–4, 112–16 and pl.XIXa; Déroche, work in progress; Paris 1982, no.338; Kuwait 1985, no.70.
39. Déroche 1983, pp.44, 117–18 and pl.XIXb; Déroche, work in progress.
40. Karatay 1962, no.25.
41. De Slane 1883–95, p.93.
42. Déroche 1983, pp.44, 119 and pl.XX; Déroche, work in progress; Paris 1982, no.358.
43. Déroche 1983b, pl.Ia
44. Déroche 1988, p.23, figs 2 and 3
45. Déroche 1983, pp.45, 133–5 and pl.XVIIb; Déroche, work in progress.
46. Déroche 1983b, pl.Ia.
47. Déroche, work in progress.
48. Déroche, work in progress.
49. Kuwait 1985, no.31;. Déroche, work in progress.
50. Déroche 1989, p.103.
51. Grohmann 1971, pl.XV/3; Bergsträsser & Pretzl 1936, p.270, pl.VI.
52. Grohmann 1971, p.105, fig.78

The New Style (pp.132–5)

1. Lings & Safadi 1976, p. 32.
2. Schroeder 1937, p. 232.
3. Sourdel-Thomine 1978, p.1122; Lings & Safadi 1976, p.32.
4. This name appears in Amari's descriptions of material in the Bibliothèque Nationale (de Slane 1883–95, notice on MS.arab.382); see also Abbott 1941, p.80.
5. For Western Kufic, see Lings & Safadi 1976, p.29, where the term is applied to cat.nos 25–6; for 'broken cursive', see Déroche 1983b, p.158.
6. The name *badī'* script was also proposed, but this was rapidly discarded; see Schroeder 1937, pp.242–8.
7. Déroche 1983b, pp.158–9; Lings (1976, p.17) speaks of 'a gesture in the direction of Naskhi and other related cursive scripts which already existed'.
8. In making this comparison, one must take into account the differing status of the manuscripts examined: one would expect there to be some difference between rough notes hastily made on a piece of papyrus for the use of the writer and a copy of the Qur'an executed by a calligrapher whose livelihood depended on such work. However, this does not prevent there being clear similarities in the way that the letters were drawn and the forms that they took; see the tables in Déroche, in press.
9. Significant examples can be found in the correspondance of Qurrah ibn Sharik (Abbott 1938): the final *alif* of doc.IV, lines 5 and 31; the *ṭā'* with the sloping shaft in docs I, III and IV; the gaping initial *'ayn*, particularly in doc.II, line 11; the ligatures with medial *'ayn* in doc.IV, line 18; etc. For a comprehensive bibliography covering the papyrus material of this period, see Grohmann 1966 or Khoury 1972.
10. Abbott 1957–72. In vol. I, fragment no. 2, for example, there is a gaping initial *'ayn* (p.1, line 19), a *ṭā'* with a sloping shaft (p.2, line 9) and a *dāl* with an acute angle between the two elements (p.3, lines 7 and 8).
11. Apart from a number of dated Qur'an manuscripts, all but one of which are in the Early Abbasid scripts (for the exception, see note 12), we have recently examined 26 non-Qur'anic Arabic manuscripts of the 9th century AD, of which 14 were Islamic, and 12 Christian (see Déroche, forthcoming). If we exclude the Christian manuscripts because of some minor peculiarities they display, the overall impression offered by the Islamic manuscripts is relatively clear, despite the occasional tendency to greater fluidity (cursiveness) in the script (see Cairo, National Library, Hadith MS.2123, or Dublin, Chester Beatty Library, MS.3494, for example).
12. The earliest dated Qur'anic material in NS.III is Dublin, Chester Beatty Library, MS.1417, which was corrected in AD 905; see Arberry 1967, no.260; James 1980, p.26.
13. This feature was appreciated, if in a confused way, by those who called the script Naskhi Kufic.
14. Déroche 1983b, p.154.
15. Grohmann 1952, pp.75–8; 1963, pp.XV–XXIX.
16. See above, note 9. Compare the painted inscription from Antinoë, dated AH 117 (AD 735), in Moritz 1905, pl.108.
17. See above, pp.37, 42; Table IV; cat.57 (D.Vb); and cat.58 (D.Vc).
18. Two fragments of a single manuscript are known: Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS.arab. 2047, (Vajda 1958, pl. I), and Berlin, Staatsbibliothek, MS.or.fol. 379, folios 23–24 (Rödiger 1875).
19. See, for instance, Sourdel 1966, pp. 1–3; Şeşen 1989, p.46, pls IVb and Va; and Déroche, forthcoming.
20. This system is attributed to Abu'l-Aswad al-Du'ali (see Fück 1960; Lings & Safadi 1976, p.19).
21. See note 12 above.
22. Mashhad, Astan-i Quds Library, MS.84; see Lings 1976, p.19 and pl.21.
23. See Lings 1976, p.18 and pls 14-16 (Tehran, collection of Agha Mahdi Kashani), for example: the spur rising from the apex of the *hā'* at pl.14, left-hand page, line 3, is very close to that found in inscriptional material, where the letter is flattened on to the line, and there is an example of a floriated final *kāf* at pl.16, right-hand page, line 3.
24. Cf. Mashhad, Astan-i Quds Library, MS.84 (see note 21 above).
25. The concept of *horror vacui,* for instance (Grohmann 1971, pp.141–88 and the bibliography).
26. See, in particular, the contribution of Samuel Flury to the study of Arab inscriptions (for a succinct analysis and bibliography of his works, see Grohmann 1967, pp.58–9).
27. The inscriptions on ceramics are, in general, very similar to the script found in manuscripts; the reasons for this are easily understood. See Bol'shakov 1958–69 and Gouchani 1986.
28. Grohmann 1971, figs 71c, 71t, 72f and 73.
29. Grohmann 1971, figs 94 and 118.
30. Grohmann 1971, figs 94, 102, 107c and 107i.
31. Grohmann 1971, figs 94, 117b and 143a.
32. Grohmann 1971, fig.99.
33. This feature seems to have been present as early as the 7th century AD: Grohmann 1971, fig.45 (an inscription from Hafnat al-Abyad dated AH 64/AD 684) and fig. 48 (a milestone from Dayr al-Qalt). However, it is not found in the milestone now preserved in the Louvre (Grohmann 1971, fig.48d).
34. Grohmann 1971, figs 71–2.
35. See Dublin, Chester Beatty Library, MS. 1434 (Arberry 1967, no.35; Lewis 1976, p.156; James 1980, p.27).
36. Lings 1976, p.18 and pl.18.

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